

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

WE THE PEOPLE: PROJECT CITIZEN STUDENTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN TUCSON, AZ

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to commend a group of students from my district for their civic engagement. Along with their teacher, these 23 students developed a proposal for curbing bullying in Arizona schools. This proposal was taken up in the Arizona State legislature with bipartisan support. The bill was introduced by Representative Phil Lopez and Representative Linda Gray, and has already passed the Education Committee and has garnered the support of Gov. Janet Napolitano. If passed, the bill would require that school boards adopt and enforce procedures that prohibit the harassment, bullying and intimidation of pupils.

Using the skill of civic engagement, taught through Project Citizen, these students have made a positive impact in their community, and serve as role models for their peers. Project Citizen is a curricular program for middle school students that promotes competent and responsible participation in local and State government. The program helps young people learn how to monitor and influence public policy. In the process, they develop support for democratic values and principles, tolerance, and feelings of political efficacy. The Project Citizen program is administered by the Center for Civic Education with the assistance of the National Conference of State Legislatures. It is funded by the U.S. Department of Education by act of Congress.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud of the contribution of these students and applaud their efforts to be actively involved in efforts to improve their community. On behalf of the schools and children of Arizona I would like to thank the following students for their admirable interest in civic engagement. I hope their enthusiasm for government is shared among their peers.

Marina Ardt, Eva Baisan, Edward Barnes, Amanda Belt, Katie Brown, Audrey Bustamante, Nicholas Franco, Taiya Gehrels, Brianna Herreras-Crouse, Shelby Kline, Katie Knight, Mounir Koussa, Alison Lambert, Ben Langworthy, Pricilla Martinez, Dillon McCallum, Dylan Monke, Danny O'Sullivan, Johnny Police, Joy Ratanavongsa, Tanisha Sosa, John Taylor, Jessica Willy, and their teacher, Cheri Bludau of the Mansfeld Middle School of Tucson.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to submit the attached article from the Tucson Citizen recognizing the valiant efforts of these young adults.

KIDS' ASSIGNMENT TURNS HEADS AT STATE LEVEL

Here is a brief primer on the workings of the Arizona Legislature from an expert who has learned how to write a bill, have it introduced by a lawmaker, then watched it advance through the Legislature:

"It is a very long process," explained Tashina Sosa. "It's like a never-ending thriller book."

Thriller book? Perhaps.

Horror story? More often.

But who am I to argue with an insider—someone who has seen firsthand the laborious and languorous way that the Legislature goes about its work.

There are several thousand professional lobbyists at work in Phoenix right now who are being paid well—very well—to get their employers' messages to lawmakers.

Tashina Sosa isn't one of them, although it is quite likely that she will be more successful than most of those professionals.

Sosa is a freshman at Tucson High Magnet School. And work that she and her classmates started last year when they were enrolled at Mansfeld Middle School may soon result in a law.

This law, unlike many of those passed by legislators, actually makes sense and actually is needed. It would require each school district to enact an anti-bullying policy.

Sosa and 23 other Mansfeld students were enrolled last year in a law-related education class taught by Cheri Bludau. Part of the class was a project called We the People-Project Citizen, a national program that promotes student participation in government.

After discussing several ideas and conducting research on matters ripe for change, the students settled on the issue of bullying, Bludau said.

But there were some concerns. Some students feared the topic may be too "child-like" and of little interest to the Legislature, Bludau said. Others were afraid that a law would be meaningless—that bullying was not something that could be stopped with legislation.

But the research was persuasive. Studies found that bullying is one of the most underrated and serious problems in schools. Students involved in murders in school and students who commit suicide are far more likely to be victims of bullies than the average student is. Education and federal officials estimate that nationwide, 160,000 students miss school every day because they fear being bullied.

"A majority of adults see it as a right of passage," Bludau said, "but the students know it is impacting their lives."

Using laws written in other states as a starting point, Bludau's class wrote a bill it hoped to have introduced in the Legislature. Class members took the bill to Project Citizen's state competition last year and won first place. They then submitted it for national competition and earned a "superior" rating—the highest award.

Last summer, Bludau e-mailed a copy of the proposed bill to Gov. Janet Napolitano. Within 45 minutes, Napolitano wrote back, saying she would be very much behind it.

Thus emboldened, the students went hunting for a legislator who would introduce the bill—and they found support from state Rep. Phil Lopes, a Tucson Democrat. He liked the bill, but because he is a member of the minority party, he needed help from a Republican. Rep. Linda Gray, a Glendale Republican and chair of the House Education Committee, signed on.

The bill was formally introduced and assigned a number and title: "HB2533—Schools; policies; bullying" and scheduled for a hearing and debate last week before the Education Committee.

The students were scheduled to go to Phoenix to testify in support of their bill—but they were foiled by another state issue. It was time for them to take part of the mandated AIMS test. Nonetheless, the bill easily passed the committee.

The bill is scheduled to be heard in the House Judiciary Committee today. Lopes is optimistic that it will eventually pass both houses and be signed into law by Napolitano.

"The kids did all the work," Lopes said. "It's just incredible. I knew nothing about the substance of the topic. But I saw what they had done and said, 'My God, we've got to help them out.'"

Sosa is excited that her class's work may soon be memorialized in state law. And so is her classmate, Mounir Koussa, also now a freshman at Tucson High. "It's good for me to know that a student can make a difference in society," Koussa said.

It has taken almost two months for the bill to make it to this point in the legislative process, and Bludau still can't quite believe her students have been so successful.

"Way back in January, little did we know that we could have this kind of impact on the state of Arizona," she said. "I'm very proud of my students, as you can tell."

Cheri Bludau's students have completed their assignment. Now legislators must complete theirs.

WHAT THE LAW WOULD DO

If the bill written by students at Mansfeld Middle School becomes law, it would require that school boards adopt and enforce procedures that prohibit the harassment, bullying and intimidation of pupils.

Those procedures must include:

A confidential process that allows pupils to report incidents of harassment, intimidation or bullying to school officials.

A procedure for the parents or guardians of pupils to submit written reports concerning harassment, intimidation or bullying to school officials.

A requirement that school district employees report suspected harassment, intimidation or bullying.

A formal process for the documentation and investigation of reported incidents.

Disciplinary procedures for students admitting to, or found guilty of harassment, intimidation or bullying.

A procedure that provides consequences for submitting false reports.

The bill submitted by the students was amended in the House Education Committee to cover events not only on school grounds, but also on school buses, at school bus stops and at all school-sponsored events and activities.

A MODEL TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to see the Boston Globe, in an editorial on Thursday, April 22, give appropriate recognition to the excellent job that

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

is done by Bristol Community College. As the Globe editorial correctly noted, "Bristol Community College in Fall River has been performing . . . superbly for more than 30 years and is a model for other community colleges . . . as they strive to prepare Massachusetts residents for the jobs of today and the future."

Dealing with a changing economy, in which workers lose their jobs through no fault of their own because of technology, globalization, and other factors, is the single most important issue facing us as a nation. The private sector is a great creator of wealth, but it does not by itself resolve the problems that are created by this ongoing transitional process, especially at times such as now when economic transitions are even more rapid than at other times.

This is why a well-funded, vigorous public sector is important to work along with the private sector in enhancing the quality of life for all Americans. And in the economic sphere, as Federal Reserve Chair Alan Greenspan frequently points out, community colleges have an essential role to play. I was therefore very pleased that the Boston Globe Editorial Board recognized Bristol Community College for the wonderful work it does.

I have been fortunate to be the Representative of Bristol Community College in Congress since 1983, and I have had numerous occasions during that time to see how well the people at BCC perform. To former President Eileen Farley and current President John Sbrega, I send my congratulations, along with my congratulations to all of the faculty, administrators and students who have done so much to make this institution an educational model.

Mr. Speaker, community colleges are an essential part of the way in which we should be responding to economic change, and because Bristol Community College is such a good example of how to do this, I ask that the editorial from the Boston Globe be printed here.

[From the Boston Globe, Apr. 22, 2004]

A MODEL TWO-YEAR COLLEGE

Community colleges have a threefold mission: They prepare some students for further schooling, they educate others for immediate entry into the work force, and they enhance the skills of those who have already been working for years. Bristol Community College in Fall River has been performing these roles superbly for more than 30 years, and is a model for other community colleges around the state as they strive to prepare Massachusetts residents for the jobs of today and the future.

"This school is wonderful," said Janet Maynard, 39, who is getting an associate's degree in nursing after a 19-year break from school. "The staff is incredible. They don't leave anybody behind." Maynard, one of 6,600 students at Bristol, is juggling a paid job—one day a week at St. Anne's Hospital in Fall River as a unit secretary—with the hard work of rearing five daughters. St. Anne's, which has worked with Bristol's nursing program for decades, is paying Maynard's tuition in the conviction that it is investing in a more skilled work force.

Jason Brilhante, 21, attends Bristol because "it's extremely affordable"—\$2,544 a year—"and has high standards." After graduating from the two-year business program, he'll go on to Bryant College in Smithfield, R.I., with the aim of becoming a certified public accountant. Bryant will give him a partial scholarship, confident that his fine work at Bristol will continue in later years.

"We partner with them all the time," said Irene Olsen, retired personnel manager for

the AT&T call center in Fairhaven and now a consultant with the union-management Alliance for Employee Growth and Development. Bristol offers business-related courses to 40 AT&T employees at the Fairhaven workplace. If students can't come to the beautiful Fall River campus, Bristol goes to them.

No wonder that Judith Gill, chancellor of higher education, praised Bristol in draft assessments of the 15 Massachusetts community colleges last fall—along with Middlesex and Holyoke community colleges—as a high-performing institution.

Other colleges complained that the six criteria used for the ratings were too few, so Gill took away the "high performing" designation from all three colleges. Gill promises that by 2006 the Board of Higher Education will devise better assessments based on 30 criteria. When that is published, the differences between high-performing colleges and those not doing well should be clear.

Assessments are important as community colleges make the case that they are vital to the development and maintenance of an educated work force in Massachusetts. They should never again have to endure the deep cuts in state aid—nearly 20 percent—they have experienced since 2001. Not all community colleges follow the example of Bristol in providing essential services to students and the wider communities they serve. Those that do earn the support and gratitude of everyone in Massachusetts.

TRIBUTE TO THE LATE MARY LADESIC

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the passing of Mary Ladesic, who was the first woman elected to countywide public office in Wyandotte County, Kansas.

Elected as Wyandotte County Treasurer in 1980, Mary Ladesic served in that position until her retirement in 1997. She died at her home on April 17. Born in Kansas City, MO, she lived in Kansas City, KS, for most of her life.

As Wyandotte County Treasurer, Mary Ladesic was a nationally recognized, innovative manager, starting a "tag team" program for marketing license plates that became a model for other Kansas counties and a successful amnesty program for collecting back taxes.

Mary Ladesic also was active in partisan politics at the county and state levels, as a member of the Southside Democratic Club and all Democratic clubs in Wyandotte County, a lifetime member of the Kansas Federation of Women's Democratic Clubs, vice chair of the Wyandotte County Democratic Central Committee, and was awarded the Georgia Neese Gray Award by the Kansas Democratic Party in 1997. As the Party's official description of that award states, it is

reserved for presentation to Kansans who have served in elected office at the municipal and/or county level and who have performed outstanding service to their local community in the pursuit of the principles of the Kansas Democratic Party. Such service commends a lengthy and broad participation in public service endeavors to the city, county and state. This award shall be considered the highest honor which can be bestowed by

the Kansas Democratic Party to its municipal and county elected officials.

Survived by her husband, William, 3 children and 10 grandchildren, Mary also was a member of Stony Point Christian Church and an active supporter of Maur Hill School in Atchison, Kansas. I commend her for a life full of support for her community and service to others, and include in the RECORD a recent article from the Kansas City Kansan detailing her life and good works. Mary Ladesic will be missed by all who knew her.

[From the Kansas City Kansan, Apr. 20, 2004]

MARY LADESIC, FIRST WOMAN ELECTED TO COUNTYWIDE OFFICE, DIES

(By Mary Rupert)

The first woman elected to a countywide public office in Wyandotte County, former Treasurer Mary P. Ladesic, died Saturday.

Ladesic, 68, held the post of county treasurer for 17 years in Wyandotte County, beginning in 1980 and retiring in 1997. She died at her home in Kansas City, Kan.

"She liked the job of county treasurer because she loved people," remembered her husband, William Ladesic.

He recalled that as county treasurer, Mary always kept \$100 of her own money in a drawer for people who didn't have quite enough money to pay their taxes. She'd give them \$20 or \$15, and tell them they could come back and repay her later, he recalled. They always did, he said.

"When she left that office, she took the \$100 with her," he said. "She trusted the people. She wouldn't say anything bad about anybody. She was just a beautiful person."

Ladesic said his wife was a good campaigner.

"She treated people all alike, it didn't make any difference," Ladesic said.

He remembered that she used to tell him that people would sometimes complain to the treasurer about their taxes.

"Any time they complain, I can't say they're wrong, because any time you're taking money away from people, they should be angry," he remembered her telling him.

Ladesic said Mary was an innovator in her job, starting a "tag team" program and an amnesty program for back taxes. She worked to get state laws changed in order to implement the programs, he said. The license tag program raised \$3 million in the first six months here, he said, and it won awards and became a model for other counties.

She also assisted in training new county treasurers at the state level, he said.

Ladesic recalled that Mary did volunteer work with her church at the food kitchen.

"She'd do the work of three people and wouldn't stop," he recalled. She also did volunteer work for Maur Hill School in Atchison, Kan., and for local Democratic events, he said.

"Mary was a pioneer in being the first woman elected to public office in Wyandotte County," said Don Denney, media relations specialist for the Unified Government. "She was a dedicated public servant and will never be forgotten for what she accomplished."

She received the Georgia Neese Gray Award and other national awards.

"She was a diehard Democrat who worked hard for her party," Denney said. "My heart goes out to her husband, Bill, and the rest of the family."

Ladesic was a member of the Southside Democratic Club, and other Democratic clubs in Wyandotte County, and had served as vice chairwoman of the Wyandotte County Central Committee of the Democratic Party.

Funeral services will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday at Stony Point Christian Church,

149 S. 78th St. Visitation is from 4 to 8 p.m. Tuesday at the church.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the genocide of Armenians at the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

Starting in 1915, the Ottoman Empire tortured and murdered up to one and a half million Armenians. More than half a million were forced to leave and went into exile.

The Armenians settled across the world lending energy and strength to their adoptive communities.

It is important to recognize the historical atrocities perpetrated against the Armenians. We must teach our children about the fear, torture, mass graves, and expulsions of the Armenian people.

Through education and commemoration, our children can grow up to be better citizens and better Americans.

By recognizing genocide for what it is, the world can wake up to the obscene nature that sometimes grips nations and work to prevent the mass killing that devastated the Armenian people.

With this year's commemoration of the Armenian genocide, I urge all Americans to be vigilant and watchful. We must prevent hatred and bigotry. We must do all we can to prevent genocide. By commemorating the past, we can make the future a better place to live.

HONORING JACOB ANISH

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate ten-year-old Jacob Anish of Chicago for his recent act of bravery and for the honor of receiving the Heroism Medal awarded by the Boy Scouts of America.

Jacob achieved this accolade for the courage he demonstrated on the evening of May 21, 2003 when a fire broke out in his family's home. Awakened by the smoke, Jacob maintained his calm despite the danger all around him. At a time when many boys of Jacob's age might have panicked, his first thought was not to run for safety but to save his sleeping younger brother, Gary.

As the smoke thickened, Jacob swiftly found his brother, then lifted him up and carried him from one side of the house to the other. The house faded into darkness as Jacob fought through the danger to find the rest of his family.

Jacob did not hesitate, nor did he waver from the Anish family fire plan which called for him to carry his younger brother to the neighbor's house and out of harm's reach. He maintained his composure throughout the fire like a young hero and natural leader.

Though their home was lost, Jacob's steadfast courage and sharp instinct made the difference in saving each of his family members,

including their pet Dalmatian. Jacob's selfless act of valor is why the Boy Scouts of America are honoring him this year.

Mr. Speaker, I join his family, his Cub Scout Pack 3943, and all the people of the fifth district of Illinois in recognizing Jacob for his courage and for receiving the Heroism Medal. I am confident that Jacob will continue to set a strong example for his brothers and sisters, his peers, and young men and women across Chicago. I am very proud of Jacob Anish.

HONORING THE LATE KEITH CYLAR

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to the late Keith Cylar, a fearless, passionate and extraordinarily effective advocate for persons with AIDS. Keith Cylar dedicated his life to the health and well-being of the most underprivileged and neglected elements of our society, and his passing at the age of 45 is a terrible loss to the city of New York and indeed to the entire Nation.

A social worker by training, Keith Cylar was the co-founder and co-President of Housing Works, one of the largest and most prominent non-profit organizations in the Nation dedicated to helping persons with AIDS. Through his leadership at Housing Works, Mr. Cylar helped to find housing for 15,000 New Yorkers. He also oversaw and managed the delivery of social services, such as job training and health care referrals, to thousands of our most underprivileged citizens, who often had few other resources upon which to draw.

Keith Cylar was also a leader of uncommon courage, an advocate who never hesitated to speak truth to power. Out of the fiery passions that drove the AIDS activist group ACT-UP, he and his partner Charles King forged a new kind of social service agency, one managed and operated by people who themselves were battling AIDS and HIV. Ultimately Keith Cylar helped transform Housing Works into one of the Nation's premier agencies providing housing to those afflicted by the AIDS epidemic. He accomplished this with caring and compassion, balancing a practical business acumen with a passionate advocacy that sometimes could be confrontational and uncomfortable for elected officials and bureaucrats alike. Indeed, because of the many demonstrations to protect City funding for programs serving people with AIDS that were organized in part by Housing Works, part of Park Row by New York's City Hall is still officially recognized to this day as "People with AIDS Way." Passionate and uncompromising in his advocacy for the underprivileged and afflicted, Keith Cylar never wavered from his mission or failed to deliver for the clients who counted on him and Housing Works.

Because of his notable achievements on behalf of those battling disease and poverty and his indomitable and distinctive presence, Keith Cylar's spirit and determination have inspired us all. I ask my colleagues to join me in saluting his remarkable life and career, and recognizing him as a great American.

GUARDSMAN AND RESERVISTS FINANCIAL RELIEF ACT OF 2003

HON. RAÚL M. GRIJALVA

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Speaker, the passage of H.R. 1779 is a welcome first step in addressing the serious problems facing our National Guard and Reserve today. But as we once again mobilize more troops and send them off to fight, and possibly die, in an increasingly hostile environment, we must ask ourselves why legislation such as H.R. 1779 has become a necessary stopgap measure.

The very fact that Guard and Reserve members feel compelled to withdraw funds from their IRA's in order to pay the bills at home is unacceptable.

Yet, this is precisely the problem: Current compensation and benefits programs for the National Guard and Reserve were developed more than 50 years ago, when it was expected that they would be mobilized only in the most dire national emergency. Over the past dozen years, the Guard and Reserve contract has changed dramatically, with more than 40 percent of members being called to duty and in some cases, being repeatedly deployed without fulfilling the requisite off-duty time period. H.R. 1799 is a band-aid measure temporarily mending a broken system. Congress must and can upgrade Guard and Reserve compensation and benefits to better offset the demands and sacrifices imposed on the Guard and Reserve community.

It is a great injustice that those who selflessly and voluntarily serve our country are not repaid in kind. By this I mean that Guard and Reserve members are ineligible for military health coverage, except while on active duty or after age 60. Although covered by TRICARE when mobilized, many Guard and Reservists and their families are faced with changing doctors and dropping private coverage. We must provide adequate and comprehensive health care coverage for the Guard and Reserve community. It is my hope that this year's Defense Authorization Act will include permanent authority for a fee-based TRICARE coverage for all drilling Guard and Reserve members, and offer all such members the option to have the government pay part or all of their employer coverage premium during extended activations.

Loan forgiveness and increased education infrastructure funding for Guard and Reservists and their families should also be a top priority during this year's budget deliberations. Earlier this year, I received a letter from one of my constituents and his wife who are both Guard Members. Both were more than willing to serve their first tour of duty in Iraq, knowing full well that this would delay by a semester their graduate course studies. Six months later, both were facing yet another extension of active duty. Along with delaying their studies and future career path, they are now also incurring interest on a loan which is not being utilized. Congress must improve educational opportunities and benefits for Guard and Reservists by providing deferments and interest payments for borrowers of student loans who are called to active duty.

Health care, timely compensation, and education funding are only a few of the many

things we should and CAN provide to our Guard and Reserve members. Extending the military pay raise, providing meaningful tax relief for military families, and improving overall quality of life entitlement programs is the very least we can do for the families and servicemembers who have endured extraordinary—and in some cases—supreme sacrifices for our country.

The mistreatment of our Guard and Reservists and its repercussions on them and their families' morale and well-being must stop. Is it too much to ask that our government provide basic necessary services such as comprehensive health coverage and timely compensation to our Guard and Reserve members?

I urge my colleagues to include funding for these measures in this year's Defense Authorization Act and to push for passage of the many proposals addressing these issues which are currently stalled in Committee.

HEALTH CARE'S BREWING STORM

HON. BARNEY FRANK

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, earlier this week I had the pleasure of inserting into this forum a very good editorial from the Boston Globe about the excellent work that is done by Bristol Community College, which I have been privileged to represent for more than twenty years. It is important for us to spread good news. But it's also important for us to give people the bad news, especially when it is bad news that could be made worse if we do not act.

One of the most important institutions in the part of Massachusetts which I represent is the Southcoast Health System, which joins major hospitals in Fall River, New Bedford and Wareham. The President of that system, John Day, is an extremely knowledgeable student of health care in America, and not only does a first-rate job of administering the hospital system, he also has been an important source of information for me and others about health care policy.

Sadly, but honestly, he recently wrote an op-ed piece in the Boston Globe which began with the quote "warning" that "a devastating health care crisis is closer than you think." John Day is deeply committed to providing the health care that people need, and he has been a leader in providing it to people of below average income in a part of the state of Massachusetts where that has been an issue. His eloquent plea for a change in our health care policy, and his dire—but hardly exaggerated—warnings about what will happen if we do not change, deserve our attention and I ask that his article be printed here.

HEALTH CARE'S BREWING STORM

(By John B. Day)

Warning: A devastating health care crisis is closer than you think. Like the side-view mirrors on our cars that warn us "objects are closer than they appear," a rupture in the Massachusetts health care system is more of a real threat than it seems at first or even second glance. The professional health care that patients receive today has given us a false sense of security over the imperiled state of the entire system.

Patients across Massachusetts have been insulated from this reality by the health

care community's medical, moral, and legal obligation to fulfill its mission at all costs. Patients continue to receive an abundance of health care services even as the economic vise on hospitals tightens.

The warning signs are easily recognizable—from the previously unacceptable delays in gaining access to doctors to the intolerably long waits in emergency rooms to ambulances being diverted from hospital to hospital. Because these cracks in the system have been incremental and the degeneration of the system gradual, we have come to accept them as routine when they are anything but. They are, in fact, alarm bells signaling the onset of a crisis.

Today's delays, long waits, and diversions are mere inconveniences compared to what may lie ahead. Do you want to see the day when patients are flatly turned away for lack of beds? Or when critical and costly services, such as psychiatric care, are eliminated? Or when resources become so scarce that only the fortunate few will have enough money and power to afford access to the advanced technologies and treatments to which many currently feel entitled?

Such dire scenarios may seem unthinkable in a state whose health care system was once the model for the nation. But there's a rapidly advancing storm poised to wreak havoc, already leaving shuttered local hospitals in its wake. In 1980 there were 118 hospitals in Massachusetts. Today there are 67.

As president and CEO of one of the largest community hospital systems in the state—and the largest employer in southeastern Massachusetts, it is my responsibility to issue the storm warning, before it hits us head-on.

I entered Massachusetts health care just after the famous blizzard of 1978, an act of nature that caused more destruction than most of us had ever experienced. The cost of the destruction and the loss of life might have been less had we the capability to warn people just how bad it was going to be.

Already, we are seeing the state eliminate insurance coverage for those who can least afford it. Health care providers are refusing to provide essential services because they cannot receive reimbursement for those services. For the first time, many of my colleagues at hospitals have begun to discuss the elimination of health care services.

SouthcoastHealth System, which I oversee, gives me a close look at this dilemma. Our patient population is older, sicker, and poorer than elsewhere in Massachusetts. More than 75 percent of our patients rely solely on Medicare and Medicaid, which reimburse hospitals substantially below our actual costs. Unlike public safety-net hospitals, community hospitals like Southcoast have no statutory entitlement to local or state funds in order to underwrite the cost of providing free care to the uninsured.

Our merger of St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford, Charlton Memorial Hospital in Fall River, and Tobey Hospital in Wareham allowed us to stabilize the financial footing of our region's health care system. By cresting efficiencies of scale and sharing resources, we now provide care where it is needed most—in our own community. A decade ago there did not exist the continuum of care that is available today for tens of thousands of families in southeastern Massachusetts.

But while we are proud of these accomplishments, we know that mergers, consolidation, and cost-cutting maneuvers are not enough. The continuing state and federal funding cuts leave many hospitals with no choice but to cut core clinical services—services everyone expects to receive at their local community hospital.

During the blizzard of '78, many coastal residents refused to believe they were in real

danger until the waves were crashing against their door. Let us not wait until we are on the brink of disaster to accept the dire circumstances that await us. It is time we recognize the tide is rising against the health care industry. It is imperative that state and federal governments, health care providers, industry leaders, and patients work cooperatively to find sustainable solutions to ensure that core medical services remain available to every resident of Massachusetts.

INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION DESIGNATING THE NEWELL GEORGE POST OFFICE IN KANSAS CITY, KS

HON. DENNIS MOORE

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. MOORE. Mr. Speaker, joined today by Representatives TODD TIAHRT, JIM RYUN and JERRY MORAN, I am introducing legislation that would designate the United States Postal Service facility located at 550 Nebraska Avenue in Kansas City, Kansas, as the "Newell George Post Office Building."

Newell Adolphus George served as a member of the 86th Congress, from 1959–61, representing the Second District of Kansas, which was redesignated as the Third District following the post-1960 congressional reapportionment. He was a member of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee. Born in Kansas City, Missouri, in 1904, he attended Hawthorne Grade School and Wyandotte High School in Kansas City, Kansas, as well as Wentworth Military Academy in Lexington, Missouri, and Park College in Parkville, Missouri.

After studying law at the University of Kansas City School of Law, Newell George obtained employment as a Capitol Hill elevator operator through the patronage of Senator George McGill of Kansas and graduated from the George Washington University Law School. He then was an attorney for the Reconstruction Finance Corporation in Washington, D.C., from 1935–1937, a regional counsel for the War Manpower Commission from 1942–43, and a regional attorney for the Bureau of Employment Security and the Federal Security Agency from 1937–52. After the Democratic Party lost control of the Executive Branch, George served as first assistant Wyandotte County Attorney from 1953–58. At that point, he began running for Congress, losing to incumbent Republican Errett Scrivner in 1954 and 1956. In 1958, however, a strong anti-Republican tide ran through the farm and western states, resulting in the defeat of numerous incumbent Senators and Representatives, including the defeat of Representative Scrivner by Newell George.

With Republican dominance returned to Kansas in 1960, Representative George was defeated for re-election by Robert Ellsworth of Lawrence, making Newell George the most recent resident of Kansas City to represent Kansas in the U.S. Congress. After his defeat, however, George was the first U.S. Attorney nominated for appointment by the new Kennedy-Johnson Administration. Newell George served as U.S. Attorney for Kansas from 1961–68. After losing another congressional race in 1968 to Representative Larry Winn, Jr., George practiced law privately in Kansas City, Kansas, and died in 1992.

Married to the former Jean Hannan of Kansas City, Kansas, Newell George was an intrepid public servant and active, concerned citizen. In addition to his political activities, he was a member of Abdallah Shrine, Scottish Rite; a master of the West Gate Masonic Lodge; president of the Kansas City, Kansas, Hi-12 Club; a member of the Kansas State Hi-12 Association; a member of the Breakfast Optimist Club; a member of the Wyandotte County, Kansas and American Bar Associations, the American Judicature Society, Delta Theta Phi law fraternity, the American Academy of Political and Social Science, the Kansas City, Kansas Chamber of Commerce, the Terrace Club, the Top o' the Morning Club, and the First Presbyterian Church of Kansas City, Kansas.

Newell George's other public service included membership on the Kansas Public Disclosure Commission; the Civil Service Commission of Kansas City, Kansas; the Kansas State Government Ethics Commission; and service as a director of the Kansas Multiple Sclerosis Society. Nicknamed "Punk" by his friends, George's other activities included managing a string of boxers, after boxing himself at Wentworth Military Academy; bowling; and adding to a collection of old books—mainly Bibles and McGuffey readers—begun by his father.

In short, Mr. Speaker, Newell A. George was the kind of community oriented, politically active individual who made things happen on the state and local level in so many American cities during the middle third of the twentieth century. With regard to Kansas and Kansas City, he was one of a small but hardy group of Democratic activists who kept two-party government alive in one of our country's most Republican states. It is fitting, therefore, that the House consider the legislation introduced today by the bipartisan Kansas House delegation that will designate Kansas City, Kansas', civic center post office in memory of U.S. Representative Newell George.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 56th anniversary of Israel's independence.

For 56 years, Israel has faced existential threats. Born out of the ashes of the Holocaust, Israel has offered its shores to the most vulnerable of the world's Jewry.

Israel is a refuge to the persecuted and has rescued Jews from Germany, Morocco, Iraq, Iran, Cuba, Ethiopia, Russia and other countries where Jewish minorities were threatened.

She has persevered because to fail would take away the one safe haven that Jews around the world have from historical charges and anti-Semitic acts.

It was 56 years ago that the Jewish State of Israel declared its independence and became the first and only democratic nation in the Middle East.

In those 56 years, Israel has defended itself from war, terrorism and anti-Semitism. It has endured unbearable losses and terrible sacrifices.

As U.S. troops fight in Iraq, a safe and democratic Israel becomes ever more important. America stands side-by-side with the only democratic nation in the Middle East and commemorates the 56th anniversary of its independence.

HONORING NORTHSIDE COLLEGE PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. EMANUEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate Northside College Preparatory High School of Chicago for its achievement on winning the first place title in the citywide Academic Decathlon and the second place position at the Illinois Academic Decathlon competition on March 13, 2004.

The Academic Decathlon is a team competition wherein students are tested through a diverse group of scholastic categories including: art, economics, essay interview, language and literature, mathematics, music science, social science and speech.

With up to nine members from each team competing in all ten events of the decathlon and representing a diversity of scholastic aptitude, the true spirit of this year's "America: The Growth of a Nation" theme has been advanced.

The decathlon, which was first created by Dr. Robert Peterson, has helped maximize the learning potential of young minds through competitive challenge. Northside College Preparatory has shown its ability to shine among the best and brightest of Chicago's academic community.

As winners of the citywide Academic Decathlon, the eight students from Northside College Prep High School went on to compete in the Illinois Academic Decathlon, and participated in the semifinals of one of the most prestigious high school academic competition in the United States.

I commend each of our Northside College Preparatory High School competitors: Andrew Miller, Catherine Cobb, Gathi Abraham, John Fitzgerald, Caitlin Lill, Aidan Roche, Geoffrey Kriston and Daniel Roe.

Reaching this level of competition is a tremendous achievement and one that deserves special recognition. Northside College Preparatory students set the strong example for academic excellence that the Academic Decathlon seeks to attain.

Mr. Speaker, I join with all residents of the Fifth Congressional District of Illinois in congratulating Northside College Preparatory High School on its achievement. I wish the Academic Decathlon competitors the best of luck and continued success as their education continues. I am very proud of these young and future leaders of tomorrow. It is my privilege to represent them in the U.S. Congress.

HONORING BILLIE JEAN KING

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Billie Jean King, a true American hero.

King single-handedly revolutionized women's tennis, bringing world attention to the excitement of the women's game and fighting to ensure that men and women compete for equal prize money. King's brilliant play and unyielding quest for equal opportunities opened doors for all women competing in sports.

A true star in her own right, King won a record 20 Wimbledon titles (winning women's singles 6 times, doubles 10 times and mixed doubles 4 times), 13 U.S. Open titles and 29 Virginia Slims singles titles. King is the only woman to win U.S. singles titles on all 4 surfaces on which it has been played (grass, clay, carpet and asphalt). She is one of only 8 players to hold a singles title in each of the Grand Slam events. In 1967, she won the triple crown of singles, doubles and mixed doubles championships at both Wimbledon and the U.S. Open.

In 1968, King became professional and by 1971, she was the first woman athlete in any sport to earn more than \$100,000 in a single year. Over the course of her career, she earned nearly \$2 million in prize money. By the time she stopped playing competitively in 1984, she had won 71 singles championships and had been ranked in the world's top ten 17 times, number one in the world 5 times and number one in the U.S. seven times. Explaining her success, she has said, "No one changes the world who isn't obsessed."

King had been a strong advocate of women's tennis and women's rights throughout her career. She convinced her colleagues to form a players' union in 1973, the Women's Tennis Association. She was then the 1972 U.S. Open women's singles champion and had been outraged that her prize money was \$15,000 less than the male champion. She threatened not to play unless the prize money was equalized by the following year and she persuaded U.S. Open organizers that the other women players would also sit out the game. In 1973, the U.S. Open became the first major tournament to offer equal prize money for men and women.

In 1973, she accepted a challenge from Bobby Riggs, former Wimbledon champion and self-professed male chauvinist pig. The prize was a winner-take-all \$100,000. The heavily promoted match drew 30,472 spectators to the arena and attracted 50 million television viewers worldwide, a record for any tennis match. King played along with the theatrics: She was carried in on a litter by four men in short togas. Riggs was wheeled in on a rickshaw pulled by models he dubbed "Bobby's Bosom Buddies." Once the game got underway, however, they were all business. King thrilled the crowd with an outstanding game of tennis, beating Riggs in straight sets, 6-4, 6-3 and 6-3. She proved that women's tennis was at least as exciting as the men's game, and that women deserved the same attention and prize money as their male counterparts.

King co-founded the Women's Sports Foundation, dedicated to promoting sports opportunities for women. In 1989 she helped found the coed World Team Tennis and served as its CEO. She is currently the director and official spokesperson for the organization, as well as a TV commentator.

Additionally, King coached the U.S. Olympic team, leading the U.S. squad to four Olympic medals. She also coached the U.S. Fed Cup teams to victory in 1976, 1996, 1999 and

2000. In 2003, she was awarded the prestigious Philippe Chatrier Award, the International Tennis Federation's highest honor. That year she was also one of six inaugural inductees in the Court of Champions at the USTA National Tennis Center.

In 1990, Life Magazine named her one of the 100 Most Important Americans of the 20th Century—the only female athlete to win the honor. She is a member of the International Tennis Hall of Fame and the National Women's Hall of Fame. She was also named Woman of the Year by Time Magazine in 1976. On April 27, 2004, King is the recipient of the National Woman's Party's Alice Award, in honor of her groundbreaking work on behalf of women in sports.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the achievements of Billie Jean King, a sports legend, feminist, and champion.

TRIBUTE TO MARY ROSE
DICKHAUT, SELECTMAN, TOWN
OF CLINTON, MASSACHUSETTS

HON. JAMES P. McGOVERN

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. McGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to one of the many great local officials who provide such dedicated service to the cities and towns all across this country that we are privileged to represent. Because our office requires that we are frequently away from our constituents, I think we sometimes fail to fully appreciate and seldom still acknowledge the daily demands that our mayors, city councilors and selectmen encounter in the communities where they live and serve.

For no less than 18 years, Mary Rose Dickhaut has met and mastered those daily demands as a selectman in the Town of Clinton, Massachusetts. On Tuesday, May 4th, she will return to life as a private citizen, leaving behind a sterling example of civic commitment and selfless devotion to one's hometown.

Mary Rose's tenure both as a member of the Board of Selectmen and as Chairman is unsurpassed in a community widely known for its rich and vibrant political culture. Her public service is remarkable not only for its longevity and distinction as the town's first and only female selectmen but for its impressive record of achievement as well.

After nearly two decades, there is scarcely a local issue or major municipal project in the Town of Clinton that has not benefitted from the strong, steady and forceful advocacy of Mary Rose Dickhaut. She led the town in its historic battle against the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority to enforce a century old agreement to provide drinking water to the citizens of Clinton. She championed the restoration of the community's Town Hall, the revitalization of its downtown and the expansion of its police station. Long before it was fashionable to do so, Mary Rose urged the town to invest in its rapidly deteriorating water and sewer infrastructure. In 1999 and 2000, she cochaired the town's 150th Anniversary Celebration Committee which planned, among many other memorable events, the first Olde Home Days Festival in Central Park that has

since grown to become a popular annual attraction for families from all over Central Massachusetts.

Mr. Speaker, while these very public accomplishments have placed Mary Rose's indelible handprint on the Town of Clinton, they do not begin to fully describe the tremendous contributions and sacrifices she has made on its behalf. As we know, many of the good deeds performed by elected officials go unnoticed and unrecorded. For 18 years, Mary Rose has graciously taken the nightly phone calls at home, politely endured the interrupted trips to the grocery store and faithfully attended the countless committee meetings and public hearings. She has endeavored whenever possible to help those who sought her capable assistance and to better her community for future generations to enjoy. Through it all, she has maintained a well-deserved reputation for honesty and integrity and earned the respect of her colleagues for her keen intellect, diligent work ethic and an unfailing fidelity to the town's best interests.

Mr. Speaker, the Town of Clinton, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the United States of America owe Mary Rose Dickhaut a debt of gratitude for her years of dedicated service. Accordingly, I respectfully request that this esteemed body convey its heartfelt appreciation to Mary Rose for her efforts and our best wishes for a happy, healthy and enjoyable retirement from public life.

Madam Chairman, you have earned it.

HONORING THE REV. DR. L.H.
MAYFIELD

HON. ROB PORTMAN

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. PORTMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Rev. Dr. L.H. Mayfield, a friend, fellow member, and retired pastor of Hyde Park Community United Methodist Church in Cincinnati, who will receive the Wesley Foundation United Methodist Campus Ministry in Cincinnati's 2004 Spirit Award on May 4, 2004.

Although he will be recognized by the Wesley Foundation for his work with young people, some say that Dr. Mayfield is best known for his attention to the needs of the poor, disadvantaged, and elderly. We can all agree that he celebrates life and has made a difference in all that he does.

The Wesley Foundation United Methodist Campus Ministry in Cincinnati has been serving Cincinnati's young adults in higher education since 1925. The Wesley Foundation's ministry is a welcoming, affirming community that nurtures spiritual growth and empowers students to explore, enrich, and practice their faith.

Dr. Mayfield was a member of the Wesley Foundation Board of Directors for 10 years. He was chairperson of the board while pastoring the Mt. Auburn United Methodist Church and serving as chaplain at Christ Hospital. Dr. Mayfield was instrumental in expanding Wesley Foundation to a full-time campus ministry with a building close to the university.

Dr. Mayfield has committed his time and energy to the Wesley Services Organization (WSO), a ministry that provides services to the

elderly. WSO ministers to the elderly through Wesley Hall and Lincoln Crawford, both skilled nursing and rehabilitation facilities, and Wesley Community Services, which serves seniors in their homes. Dr. Mayfield has been a member of the WSO Board of Directors since 1965; and in 1980, he helped to raise the funds to build a new nursing facility for Wesley Hall. He also led the effort to regain Lincoln Crawford's financial stability.

Dedicated to many organizations in our area, Dr. Mayfield has volunteered with Hospice of Cincinnati, the Elizabeth Gamble Deaconess Home Association, the American Cancer Society, Cancer Family Care, and prison ministries.

Dr. Mayfield has received numerous awards for his community service. In 1999, he was the recipient of the Greater Cincinnati Foundation's prestigious Jacob E. Davis Volunteer Leadership Award, which is presented annually to an outstanding volunteer in the community, who then awards the money to a nonprofit organization. Dr. Mayfield designated WSO.

All of us in the Greater Cincinnati area thank Dr. Mayfield for his service and congratulate him on receiving this well-deserved honor.

EASTER CRACKDOWN ON THE
MONTAGNARDS

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, Easter is usually a joyous time for Christians throughout the world. Unfortunately, that was not the case this year for many Montagnards Christians, ethnic minorities in Vietnam's Central Highlands. On Saturday April 10, more than a thousand ethnic minority Christians assembled in the streets of Buon Ma Thuot to protest ongoing religious repression and confiscation of tribal lands.

Their peaceful protests were met with brutal force by the Vietnamese police, who attacked and arrested the protesters and sealed off the area to foreigners—much like the Chinese Tiananmen Square massacre in 1989.

Numerous reports state that hundreds may be dead with many others arrested, injured, and or in hiding. This follows years of ongoing persecution and a brutal crackdown in December of 2001, when the government also forcibly suppressed mass protests in the region, after which the Vietnamese government closed hundreds of Christian Churches.

Religious persecution in Vietnam against Catholics, Christians, members of the Unified Buddhist Church, and members of Vietnam's indigenous religious groups has been well documented in the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights and International Religious Freedom.

Last year, the Commission on International Religious Freedom recommended Vietnam should be designated as a Country of Particular Concern for "systematic, egregious, and ongoing" religious freedom abuses. As if there was any doubt, the Easter crackdown confirms the fact that Vietnam should be designated as a Country of Particular Concern for violations in religious freedom. Protections and

assistance for Montagnard asylum seekers should be provided also be provided by the Cambodian government and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.

Congress will continue to keep up the pressure on the regime in Hanoi. We will work to pass H. Con. Res. 378, a resolution calling for the release of Father Nguyen Van Ly, a prominent and outspoken Catholic priest, that was reported out of the House International Relations Committee and has nearly 90 cosponsors.

And we will also work to pass H.R. 1587, "The Vietnam Human Rights Act," which calls for careful monitoring of human rights in Vietnam. Similar legislation cleared the House 410-1 in the 107th Congress but stalled in the Senate.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to submit the following articles by Human Rights Watch detailing the events of the Easter crackdown, to the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD.

The United States and the world cannot turn a blind eye to this Easter crackdown and continual persecution of Montagnards and religious groups in Vietnam. We must take a stand.

[Article from Human Rights Watch]

VIETNAM: OPEN CENTRAL HIGHLANDS TO INTERNATIONAL OBSERVERS REPORTED KILLINGS OF MONTAGNARD PROTESTERS MUST BE INVESTIGATED IMMEDIATELY

(NEW YORK, April 22, 2004)—Vietnamese security forces appear to have coordinated with armed men in civilian clothing to savagely attack Montagnard protesters at more than a dozen mass demonstrations during Easter weekend, Human Rights Watch said today.

"The international community must act now and insist that Vietnam allow independent observers into the highlands to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation," said Dinah PoKempner, General Counsel for Human Rights Watch. "We've received alarming reports that scores of protesters were wounded during the demonstrations, and that some protesters were beaten to death."

Large-scale unrest involving between 10,000 and 30,000 indigenous minority Montagnards occurred in the Central Highland provinces of Dak Lak, Gia Lai, and Dak Nong on April 10 and 11, according to Vietnam's state media and independent accounts. Montagnard activists in Vietnam and abroad say that their movement seeks to peacefully press for religious freedom and return of ancestral lands in the Central Highlands. The Vietnamese government has charged that "anti-government" and "counter-revolutionary" elements are inciting the Montagnards to seek a separatist state.

Human Rights Watch has received firsthand reports that security forces and men in civilian clothing, armed with metal bars, shovels, clubs with nails attached to them, machetes, and chains, confronted Montagnard protesters at more than a dozen locations leading into Buon Ma Thuot, the capital of Dak Lak province, on the morning of April 10. According to witnesses, the demonstrators were not armed, although some defended themselves when attacked by throwing stones at the police.

In twelve eyewitness accounts obtained by Human Rights Watch, sources from seven different locations in Dak Lak, Gia Lai and Dak Nong provinces described seeing Vietnamese police, and civilians working with the police, beating protesters. Vietnam's state-controlled media reported that two protesters were killed—one from rocks thrown by other protesters and another who

was run over by a tractor driven by Montagnards. While it is impossible to confirm the numbers of casualties because the government is barring outside observers from the region, to date Human Rights Watch has received credible eyewitness accounts that at least ten Montagnards were killed—one from a gunshot wound to the head and the others from beatings and hundreds were wounded.

Clashes broke out at more than a dozen locations when security forces and ethnic Vietnamese in civilian clothes blocked demonstrators on roadways leading into Buon Ma Thuot, including Phan Chu Trinh Road northwest of the city; at Ea Knir Bridge on the road from Ea Kao commune, which lies east of the city; and at three locations along the road leading to Krong Pak district town, which lies northeast of the city, including the Ea Pak and Krong Ana bridges. Particularly hard hit at Phan Chu Trinh Road were 3,000 protesters from several villages in Cu Mgar district, northwest of Buon Ma Thuot.

"The security forces were well prepared for the protesters," said PoKempner. "They had set up ambushes at key places such as bridges and the main roads into the city, and assembled people dressed as civilians holding crude weapons to block the roads and attack the protesters."

Security officials confiscated and burned hundreds of the farm tractors and makeshift trailers that many Montagnards were traveling on, which had been packed with food and supplies in preparation for several days of protests.

In Gia Lai province, Vietnamese state media reported that demonstrators from Ayun Pa, Cu Se, Dak Doa, Duc Co and Chu Prong districts gathered at the provincial administrative offices in Pleiku provincial town on April 10. On April 11, Montagnards gathered to demonstrate in numerous communes in Ayun Pa, Cu Se, and Dak Doa districts of Gia Lai. Human Rights Watch has received reports of clashes in at least seventeen locations in Gia Lai, with the fiercest incidents occurring in Ha Bau, A'Dok and Glar communes of Dak Doa district and Ia Tiem commune of Cu Se district.

State media reported that the provincial hospital in Pleiku received fifty-two injured people. The provincial hospital in Dak Lak reported forty injured people on the night of April 10. Prior to a government-imposed news blackout on hospital personnel, staff at Pleiku hospital told reporters that they had received scores of wounded people on Sunday night, many with deep gashes and head injuries, and that at least two demonstrators died that night. Many other wounded demonstrators, fearing arrest, have not gone to the hospitals despite being in need of medical attention, Human Rights Watch said.

Witnesses said authorities quickly collected wounded people and dead bodies from the Phan Chu Trinh area, and that within days, the blood on the roadway had been washed away.

Human Rights Watch stressed the urgency of an independent investigation. "We fear that a huge cover-up operation has likely already taken place," said PoKempner. "The Vietnamese government needs to account for the large numbers of people who never returned to their villages after the demonstrations and are now feared to be dead or detained at unknown locations."

Hundreds of Montagnards have fled their villages and gone into hiding, Human Rights Watch said. In violation of Cambodia's obligations under international law, Cambodian security forces have been instructed to deport any Montagnards who try to cross the border.

TESTIMONY: THE KILLINGS ON PHAN CHU TRINH ROAD

A twenty-six year old Ede woman described a deadly incident she witnessed on Saturday morning, April 10 when several thousand Montagnard protesters, some riding on their farm tractors, arrived at Phan Chu Trinh road, an industrial area of machine shops and welding supply stores on the outskirts of Buon Ma Thuot. Police had lined up students and ethnic Vietnamese men in civilian clothing holding metal bars, shovels, and machetes along the roadway, she said.

"They suddenly rushed at the unarmed crowd, beating the demonstrators until many were lying in the streets," she said. "They chased demonstrators who tried to flee, including children and women."

She and many other demonstrators fled to the coffee fields behind the shops lining the roadway, chased by security forces. She described what happened:

"A thousand people tried to get away from the slaughter by the police and civilians. They were beating us with metal bars and sticks. People were bleeding from their throats, noses, mouths, and eyes. The villagers were crying as they tried to get away from the slaughter by the police and civilians. We were running helter-skelter. Those who tried to hide in the coffee plantation were caught, beaten and killed on the spot. Police, students, and Vietnamese threw rocks at us. Many of us were bleeding from being hit on our heads with rocks. Many people were injured and bleeding. We didn't have any first-aid for their wounds. They were bleeding from their throats, noses, mouths, and eyes. A blind woman sitting on the farm tractor was killed on the road by a dozen Vietnamese people, including police. They asked her to get down from the tractor but she could not because she was blind. They rushed at her and beat her until she fell from the tractor and died. The police and Vietnamese civilians smashed and stepped on our food, clothing and blankets we had prepared for a long-term peaceful demonstration asking for freedom and the end to harassment of our religion and our Montagnard life."

HONORING NORVA MAXWELL, VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA CLINICIAN OF THE YEAR

HON. FRANK PALLONE, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Norva Maxwell of the Visiting Nurses Association of Central Jersey. Ms. Maxwell was recently chosen as the Visiting Nurse Association of America VNAA, Clinician of the Year among 90,000 VNAA Clinicians nationwide.

Norva Maxwell's holistic approach to patient care makes her highly effective as a community health nurse. Her clinical skills are impeccable. Her patience, sensitivity, and thoroughness allow her to detect problems others might have missed. In a number of instances, her experienced assessment has resulted in appropriate interventions for patients with assessment of respiratory distress, changes in mental status, or exacerbated injection.

Patients and families aptly describe Norva as "a credit to the nursing profession." There

are countless examples of Norva going beyond the requirements of her job, visiting patients on her own time to bring them home-made chicken soup or picking up medications at the pharmacy.

Norva provides professional and empathetic care to people of all ethnic, cultural, and financial backgrounds in a very ethnically diverse service area. Due to her extensive knowledge of area social programs, Norva regularly develops a safety net of services for patients ready for discharge.

Norva is a member of the Salvation Army, and she and her family have worked at the Salvation Army camps for many years. Norva is always an active volunteer with a shelter for homeless families, and has made it possible for the families to spend a week at the camp each summer.

Mr. Speaker, again, I congratulate Norva Maxwell who's strong clinical skills, compassionate spirit and interaction with the community make her a true Ambassador for her agency and for neighborhood nursing.

REV. EDWARD LISOWSKI CELEBRATES THE ANNIVERSARY OF HIS 40TH YEAR OF ORDINATION

HON. GERALD D. KLECZKA

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. KLECZKA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the work of Father Edward Lisowski who is celebrating the 40th anniversary of his ordination into the priesthood of the Milwaukee Archdiocese. He was ordained by Archbishop William E. Cousins at St. John's Cathedral on May 30, 1964.

Over the years Father Lisowski has served in a variety of capacities including Pastor or Associate Pastor for 18 years. He has been a Chaplain for 22 years with the Department of Veterans Affairs, serving veterans at the Zablocki VA Medical Center and the North Chicago Veterans Administration Hospital.

Father Lisowski has devoted his life to serving parishioners and patients of all walks of life and has generously and compassionately offered his support and spiritual guidance. A gifted and talented speaker and educator he continues to offer his wisdom and comfort to all who are in need.

Born in Cudahy, WI, to Wallace and Victoria Lisowski in 1936 he received his first Sacraments at Holy Family Parish in Cudahy graduating from the grade school and later graduating from Don Bosco High School. He also completed a bachelor of arts in philosophy degree from De Sales University, which was followed by 4 years of study of Theology at St. Francis Seminary. Father Lisowski was also granted a master's degree from Marquette University in 1979. In addition to taking extensive and advanced training in Clinical Pastoral Education Father Lisowski has distinguished himself by serving on several prestigious professional boards and organizations.

I want to congratulate Father Lisowski on this his 40th anniversary of commitment to God and the Catholic Church and extend my best wishes to him on this important occasion.

TRIBUTE TO THE STATE OF ISRAEL ON THE 56TH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. GARY L. ACKERMAN

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to add my voice to the chorus of Members sharing their warm wishes, praise, and congratulations to the State of Israel on its 56th anniversary of its Independence Day. I too am deeply gratified and proud of the many accomplishments of this relatively young country and the ancient people who have brought it into being and sustained it against astonishing odds.

Last week, Members commemorated Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day; today, Yom HaAtzmaot, Israel Independence Day. Appropriately, we go from tragedy to celebration, but there is no question the two events and the two moods are inseparable. Without the singular tragedy of the Holocaust there might not have been a State of Israel created; with a State of Israel in existence, there might not have been a Holocaust. Bonded together are birth and death; bottomless despair and limitless hope.

Unquestionably, Israel has achieved more than anyone might have believed fifty-six years ago. The Jewish State has created and sustained the only true democracy in the entire Middle East. Faced with an unending series of defensive wars, stringent military service requirements and necessarily high defense spending, in the entire region, Israel is the only country which routinely lives with genuine respect for civil rights, rule of law, due process, and authentic elections that reflect the will of a free people. The only state in the Middle East with a culture that is Western and open, full of dissent and argument, pulsing with innovation in the arts and constantly open to change is Israel. In the sphere of economics, Israel has transformed itself into miniature powerhouse. Israel's economy is vibrant and dynamic, pushing the boundaries of technology and attracting venture capital at a remarkable rate. Israeli scientists, doctors and engineers routinely contribute to the body of human knowledge, and produce inventions that make all our lives safer, more convenient and more enjoyable.

Given the historic combination of its emphasis on education and technology, and the freedom enjoyed by the Israeli people, it is no surprise that Israel, with a population of only a few million, has a gross domestic product above \$100 billion and an industrial base greater than all its neighbors combined. Not surprising but still miraculous.

Even more amazing is that Israel has achieved all this while also fulfilling its mandate as the safe harbor and refuge of the Jewish People. To succeed as Israel has is remarkable; to do so while absorbing millions of Jewish refugees from post-War Europe, the Arab states, from Ethiopia, and from the former Soviet Union is unfathomable. Millions of Jews from around the world, including this country, have made aliyah, have "gone up" to the Land of Israel, and made it their home. The result is a country which is an incredible mosaic, a new country formed in a timeless land by an ancient people.

And, as we all know, the Israel Defense Forces have made their reputation on the field of battle as one of the premier military organizations in human history. Unfortunately, tragically, they have been compelled to do so by circumstances not of their choosing. Israel has been under attack and at war for every single day of its existence. This painful fact is not now, and never has been, a result of the choices of Israel's government which has always sought peace and been desperate to make peace.

Mr. Speaker, no other country in the entire world is forced to endure a state of constant siege. No other country in the world regularly endures calls by other states for its extirpation. No other country in the world suffers the indignity of having terrorists committed to its destruction routinely described merely as "militants," or praised as "martyrs." No other country in the world is so unfairly isolated and routinely singled out for criticism and contempt.

Since President Harry Truman decided to ignore his advisors and chose to support the creation of Israel, the United States has been a true friend and ally to the Jewish State. Our values, our heritage, and our interests guide our special relationship, and it is no surprise our ties have only gotten stronger. In a time when both countries have been compelled to fight back against terrorism, there is no question we will only go from strength to strength.

Mr. Speaker, I am enormously proud of the ties between our nation and the State of Israel, and equally so, the support this House has shown again and again, without fail. On this occasion celebrating the 56th anniversary of Israel's Independence Day, I know the whole House joins me in extending to the Israeli people and their government the most enthusiastic of congratulations and best wishes for the many, many years of freedom and prosperity that are certain to come.

HONORING THE LIFE OF LAKE CHARLES NATIVE JEFFREY PARKER

HON. CHRISTOPHER JOHN

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. JOHN. Mr. Speaker, on Friday, April 9, 2004, my district suffered the loss of a brave American. KBR Contractor Jeffrey Parker of Moss Bluff, LA, was killed in an attack on a fuel convoy while working as a truck driver in Iraq. Jeff was one of seven contractors and two U.S. soldiers reported missing in the attack.

As he is laid to rest in Louisiana, we honor his commitment to his family, his work, and his country. As his company noted, these contractors that lost their lives were "brave hearts without medals, humanitarians without parades, and heroes without statues."

Neighbors described him as a "friend to everyone." Jeff was one of nine children in the Parker family. He was a father and a grandfather. He was to be married this summer after his work in Iraq was completed.

He took the job with KBR in Iraq to provide for his loved ones. He served his country in a vital support role and he tackled his job with courage, conviction, and bravery. He will be remembered as a hero whose spirit and determination defines the American spirit.

To his family, I humbly extend my thanks and the sincere appreciation of a grateful community, State, and country for his sacrifice. On behalf of the people of the 7th Congressional District and the U.S. Congress, I extend my heartfelt sympathy to the Parker family.

CONGRATULATING STUDENTS
FROM NASHVILLE'S HILLSBORO
HIGH SCHOOL ON THEIR
ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE NA-
TIONAL "WE THE PEOPLE"
CIVICS COMPETITION

HON. JIM COOPER

OF TENNESSEE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate an extraordinary group of students from Hillsboro High School in Nashville, Tennessee, who are this year's State winners of the Nation's largest annual competition in civics education: We the People: The Citizen and the Constitution. I am proud of these outstanding students for having earned a chance to represent our fine State and to compete in the national finals here in Washington.

These students should be honored not only for their achievements in this prestigious competition but for their interest in politics, government and current events. As citizens of this great Nation, we are all duty-bound to exercise the rights and obligations of citizenship. Recent times, however, have seen a steep decline in voter turnout and increased cynicism about the political process. I am refreshed by the energy and enthusiasm of these students and am impressed by their commitment to the democratic ideals of our Nation. These students will no doubt serve as role models for their generation.

I am also proud to support the annual We the People competition, which is the most extensive educational program in the country developed specifically to educate young people about the U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights. This program is administered by the Center for Civic Education and funded by the U.S. Department of Education. Since its creation, We the People has won widespread recognition for its effective and innovative programs to encourage civic participation in our younger generation. I am confident that Congress will maintain its support of this fine program and ensure its continued success.

On behalf of the people of the Fifth Congressional District of Tennessee, I extend my heartiest congratulations to the following Hillsboro High School students: Emily Bacon, Susan Bursch, Molly Caldwell, Julianne Codd, Maeve Cornell-Taylor, Jonathan Cox, Emelyn Davies, Alice Floyd, Maisha Grigsby, Claire Hipkens, Anna Holt, Hal Nichols, Caitlin Pinhey, Kaitlin Reinhardt, Andrew Schneider, Lauren Smyth, Michael Terrell, Lee Tice and David Winjun. I also commend the leadership of their teacher, Ms. Catherine Bradshaw.

I applaud the tremendous achievement of these students and wish them well.

IN HONOR OF THE 75TH BIRTHDAY
FOR THE UNIVERSITY PARK EL-
EMENTARY SCHOOL

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the 75th Birthday for the University Park Elementary School in Dallas, Texas. I am proud to represent the University Park Elementary School in Congress, and four of my staff members in my Washington, D.C. and Dallas offices are graduates of the Highland Park Independent School District, and so I am well aware of the quality education that University Park Elementary School and the Highland Park Independent School District deliver on a yearly basis. One of my staff members has three generations of his family that attended University Park Elementary School.

The State of Texas is celebrating 150 years of publicly educating young Texans, and along with this important anniversary is the 75th Birthday for the University Park Elementary School. This is a very special milestone in the history of the school, its students, families, teacher professionals, support staff, and the greater community that it has served with distinction for three-quarters of a century. I congratulate the school's principal Dr. Lynda Carter for her excellent leadership of the school during this birthday year.

University Park Elementary School opened its doors in September of 1928 with six teachers and 165 students. The school has come a long way from its initial academic year, as in 1988 the United States Department of Education cited University Park Elementary School for its excellence in education; and it has also received national recognition for excellence in the area of character development. In 2001, University Park Elementary School received special recognition from the Texas Commissioner of Education, Jim Nelson, for being one of the eight schools in Texas to receive an "Exemplary" rating for nine years of the rating system's existence.

University Park Elementary School will formally celebrate its birthday on Friday morning, and I am very much looking forward to being there personally in honor of such a great occasion. I sincerely salute the University Park Elementary School on its birthday, and I wish it continued success for many years to come.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO ALEX
MADONNA

HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to pay tribute to Alex Madonna of San Luis Obispo, California, in my district. Alex died on April 22, leaving a hole in the heart of his wife of 55 years, Phyllis, and in those of his large and devoted family. He will truly be missed by the people of San Luis Obispo County, and throughout the Nation.

Alex Madonna was a second generation American whose grandparents emigrated from Switzerland. A self-made man who was guided by a strong work ethic, Alex made his mark building and paving highways throughout the state and in numerous building projects. During World War II, Alex used his construction skills as a soldier in the Army Corps of Engineers. A champion of the agricultural community, Alex was also known as "the host from the coast" at the Madonna Inn, a landmark in San Luis Obispo.

In addition to his numerous business accomplishments, Alex Madonna was also a philanthropist of legendary proportions. Alex Madonna's generosity to the people and the organizations of San Luis Obispo is part of history. Nearly everyone in town has a story about a donation that Alex and Phyllis have made to our community.

San Luis Obispo will be wearing pink on Thursday, the day of Alex Madonna's funeral. The church will be packed with people wanting to say goodbye to a man whose life can be summed up in these words: determination, hard work and a great heart.

HONORING ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE
DAY

HON. MARTIN FROST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. FROST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate Israel Independence Day on the 56th Anniversary of its birth as a state.

As Americans, we all take great pride in the founding of our country. The birth of Israel also serves as a sense of pride—not only to the people of Israel, but also to Jewish people throughout the world. Almost every day, we receive news of Israelis falling victim to terrorism and tragedy, yet every day, Israel stands as a symbol not just of the Jewish faith, but of freedom loving people who have the courage, even today, to live in danger, fight for freedom and work for peace.

While Israel and America were founded in different centuries, a world away from each other, both countries share similar values which provide a foundation for a strong society. These values are rooted in educating our children, keeping our families healthy, and protecting our citizens from harm.

I applaud Israel for all it has accomplished throughout the past 56 years. It has weathered war and terrorism, and yet it still remains a democratic state committed to improving the quality of life for all its citizens. The commitment to serve its people is the mark of a great country, because only when a state wants its citizens to succeed, will it too succeed. In its short but rich history, Israel has proven its success by this unwavering dedication.

Mr. Speaker, it is with honor and respect of Israel's great history, that I congratulate the country for its successes, and look forward to a long-lasting relationship between our two countries, based on our shared values.

NATIONAL CERVICAL CANCER
SCREENING MONTH

HON. MICHAEL G. OXLEY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. OXLEY. Mr. Speaker, in honor of National Cervical Cancer Screening Month in January, I would like to bring attention to the tremendous opportunity our country has to make cervical cancer the first real victory in the war on cancer. For the first time in over 50 years, we have a new screening approach that offers great hope for finally eliminating cervical cancer. We must seize this opportunity by ensuring that all women have access to the best tests available.

Worldwide, cervical cancer is the second most-common cancer among women. Approximately 470,000 women are afflicted and 230,000 die each year, according to the World Health Organization. In the United States, incidence and deaths from cervical cancer have decreased by almost half since the early 1970s, largely due to widespread screening with the Pap test, according to the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. However, research shows that cervical cancer rates have remained steady for the past few years. According to the American Cancer Society, over 10,500 American women will be diagnosed with cervical cancer this year and 3,900 will die.

No American woman, however, should die of cervical cancer because it is nearly 100 percent preventable. It is a slow-developing disease that can usually be treated easily before abnormal cells develop into cancer. According to the American Cancer Society, when detected at an early stage, cervical cancer has one of the highest 5-year survival rates of all cancers. The key to prevention and successful outcomes is to screen women early using the best screening approaches possible.

While the Pap test has gone a long way toward reducing cervical cancer rates, it is not perfect. It relies upon a visual examination of cervical cells, and errors in collecting the cells or interpreting them can lead to false-negative results. According to the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the accuracy of the conventional Pap smear at identifying women with cervical cancer or precancerous conditions was only 51 percent. Newer, improved Pap tests bring that accuracy up to a range of 61 percent to 95 percent, depending upon the study cited.

While imperfect, the Pap test has been so successful to date largely because it is done with high frequency. If cervical cancer or its precursors are missed in one screening round, they are likely to be detected in a subsequent screening round. At the same time, women who receive "false-positive" results from the Pap test usually undergo necessary follow-up Pap tests or other procedures.

We know that a virus, human papillomavirus, (HPV) is the cause of cervical cancer. Studies show that it is found in 99.7% of cervical cancers and must be present for the disease to develop. Most people will be infected with HPV at some point in their lives, but their body's immune system will clear the virus without any noticeable symptoms. However, persistent infection over several years with high-risk types of HPV can lead to cer-

vical cancer in women. Persistent HPV infections are more likely to be found in women aged 30 and older.

In 2003, a DNA test for HPV was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for routine screening in women aged 30 and over in conjunction with a Pap test. Numerous studies show that adding an HPV test to a Pap test can increase to almost 100 percent the ability to identify women with cervical cancer or precursor conditions. Additionally, HPV testing gives clinicians important information: the ability to identify which women are at increased risk of cervical cancer and who should therefore be monitored more closely to ensure that cervical cancer is not missed. Women who test negative with both tests can be better reassured, while reducing their need for unnecessary, invasive exams.

Since its approval last year by the FDA, HPV testing has gained rapid acceptance in the healthcare community. Already, leading medical organizations, including the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, the American Cancer Society and the Association of Reproductive Health Professionals, have updated their screening guidelines to include HPV testing in routine screening for women aged 30 and over.

These groups' guidelines recommend that, because HPV testing is so sensitive and because cervical cancer develops so slowly, that women can be safely screened with the combination of a Pap test and an HPV test every three years. Research shows that this can also result in lower long-term costs. With this approach, however, it is important that we not confuse infrequent cervical cancer screening with infrequent gynecologic visits. This essential annual exam also screens for such conditions as breast cancer, hypertension, osteoporosis and STDs. For many women, the gynecologic exam is their only opportunity each year for routine, preventive medical care.

Major private insurers now reimburse for HPV testing as well as covering a woman's annual gynecologic exam. These include Aetna, Cigna and many Blue Cross Blue Shield plans. Last month, Kaiser Permanente, the nation's leading health maintenance organization, announced that its largest region will now offer HPV testing, along with a Pap test, as standard-of-care cervical cancer screening for all women aged 30 and over. Earlier this month, the nation's largest women's health practice in the country also announced that it will offer HPV testing to all of its patients who are 30 and over as part of their routine cervical cancer screening program.

As the private healthcare system brings newer and better technology to women, we must make sure that all women have access to these advanced screening techniques. All women deserve to benefit from the most effective screening technologies available. Having advanced testing technology is the first step in eliminating cervical cancer.

250TH ANNIVERSARY OF
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY

HON. SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO

OF WEST VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. CAPITO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 250th Anniversary of Hampshire

County, West Virginia, which I proudly represent here in Congress. The Virginia General Assembly authorized the creation of Hampshire County effective May 1, 1754, removing the South Branch, Patterson Creek, New Creek, and Capon River valleys from Frederick County, Virginia. It was named after the English county of the same name.

Hampshire County was established to provide an accessible local government for citizens on the north side of Cape Capon and Warm Spring Mountain and to more effectively deal with the conflicts stemming from the onset of the French-Indian war.

The history of Hampshire County extends longer than that of the United States or the State of West Virginia. The county has undergone several border changes over the years; at one time it included all of present day Mineral, Hardy, and Grant counties, along with portions of Morgan and Pendleton counties, an area extending 2,800 square miles. Today, the county has an area of just over 640 square miles, but continues to grow in population. The county's population grew by 22.5 percent between 1990 and 2000, and currently 20,798 people call Hampshire County home.

I am honored to represent Capon Bridge, Mill Creek, Romney, and the other communities of Hampshire County here in Congress. I congratulate Hampshire County on its 250th anniversary and wish the county all the best for the next 250 years.

WELCOME TO DANISH FOREIGN
MINISTER DR. PER STIG MOLLER

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I invite my colleagues to join me today in welcoming to the United States and to the American Congress the Foreign Minister of Denmark, Dr. Per Stig Moller. Dr. Moller has served as his country's Foreign Minister since 2001. During his tenure, Denmark has shown strong support for the United States in the war against terrorism and has provided military forces to assist us in Afghanistan and Iraq. In a time of strained trans-Atlantic relations, the Danes have remained steadfast and unwavering supporters of the United States.

Denmark has contributed one of the largest Special Forces contingents in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, as well as providing F-16 aircraft for use there. From the very beginning of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Denmark has been an active member of the coalition and has contributed combat forces including a submarine and a corvette, as well as a medical team. Denmark has shown its willingness to continue its support in Iraq with stabilization forces and financial and human support. To date, Denmark has appropriated more than 500 million US Dollars for Operation Iraqi Freedom, including assistance for humanitarian aid and reconstruction. This represents a contribution of some 100 dollars per person, making Denmark the country that has contributed the most per capita except for the United States and the United Kingdom. At present, more than 500 Danish soldiers are daily risking their lives in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the American people, I want to express to the Danish people and the Danish government—and particularly to the families of those Danes who have made the ultimate sacrifice—our deepest gratitude for their assistance in the struggle in Iraq. Denmark has suffered both military and civilian deaths and casualties in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Moller has played a critical role in Denmark's support of our efforts against terrorism since he became Denmark's Foreign Minister in 2001. In addition, he has demonstrated remarkable foreign policy leadership during the Danish Presidency of the European Union in 2002. Under Denmark's leadership of the EU, the historic expansion of the European Union was agreed upon. Under Dr. Moller's leadership Denmark has affirmed its commitment to the war on terrorism and he has been dedicated to seeking a comprehensive and lasting peace in the Middle East.

Dr. Moller was born in Denmark in 1942. He received his MA in literature from the University of Copenhagen. In 1973, he received his PhD, and he is a highly respected intellectual. For many years he has been a widely read commentator in leading daily papers. For many years he was a member of the senior management of National Danish Radio, and he later became Chairman of the "Radio Council," the Executive Program Board of National Danish Radio.

Born into politics, Dr. Moller followed in the footsteps of both his father and mother, who were leading conservative politicians. He became a member of the Danish Parliament in 1984, and since that time, he has been a leading spokesman for his party, particularly on foreign affairs and human rights issues. For more than a decade, he was a member of the Council of Europe. In 1997, he became the chairman of his party. Previous to his appointment as Foreign Minister, he served as Minister of Environment, where carried out extensive environmental reforms.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Moller is the author of numerous books on a variety of themes—from the history of the Baltic Countries to environmental problems and the values of an "open society." His book about Danish pastor Kaj Munk, who was a leading opponent of the German occupation of Denmark during World War II, became a national bestseller when it was published in 2000.

The political and intellectual efforts of Dr. Moller have been recognized in numerous honors and awards that he has received. In 1997 he was elected "Politician of the Year" in Denmark. He has received a series of prestigious Danish awards, including the "Georg Brandes Prisen" and "Kaj Munk Prisen." Internationally, he has been recognized with numerous awards, including the Raoul Wallenberg Medal.

Mr. Speaker, I would be remiss if I do not mention another facet of Denmark's efforts to improve relations with the United States—an effort in which the Danish Foreign Ministry has played an important role. Each year for the past several years, the Humanity in Action program has brought Danish students to the United States to serve as fellows in offices and committees of the United States House of Representatives, and a similar number of American students have gone to Denmark to learn first-hand about the Danish political system. Thus far, some 60 students have participated in this program. This exchange is an im-

portant element in strengthening the bonds of understanding between Danes and Americans of the next generation of political leaders.

Mr. Speaker, the Congressional Friends of Denmark are hosting Foreign Minister Moller for his visit to Capitol Hill today. This Congressional member organization was established in 1999 to foster stronger relations with the government and people of Denmark. The Friends of Denmark include many members of this body who are of Danish heritage, who have Danish constituents, who seek to strengthen ties between our two countries and/or who admire the contributions of the Danish people and their government to international peace and security and respect for human rights. Mr. Speaker, urge my colleagues to join me today in welcoming and honouring Danish Foreign Minister Dr. Per Stig Moller on his visit to the United States Congress.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate the 89th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, a painful chapter in world history when the international community stood silent as Armenian villages were purged and systematically destroyed.

Between the years of 1915 and 1923, close to one and half million Armenians were killed while hundreds of thousands of others were mercilessly deported, exiled, and uprooted from their homes. Although the atrocities were documented by the United States and others, the information was never acted upon. Sadly, even today, the issue remains buried.

After 89 years, the victims and their descendants deserve better. No longer should their suffering go unnoticed or unmourned. Recognition of the Armenian Genocide is long overdue. It is time for the United States to make a concerted effort to overcome the historical denial that genocide took place, and put an end to the harmful isolation of Armenia that tragically continues.

We must identify ways to facilitate the lifting of the blockade against Armenia and encourage a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabagh. We must help Armenia continue to flourish as a burgeoning democracy, extend Permanent Normal Trade Relations (PNTR) status to strengthen her economy, and stand ready to help maintain her military strength.

Let us resolve ourselves to ensure that the coming year will be one that brings full recognition of the genocide that took place, and peace to the region and the memory of those who perished.

56TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is my honor to rise today to recognize and honor the

56th Anniversary of Israel's Independence Day. With the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, Jewish independence was restored.

I commend the Israeli people for their remarkable achievements in building a new state and a pluralistic and democratic society in the Middle East in the face of terrorism and hostility. On this occasion, I extend my warmest congratulations and best wishes to the state of Israel and her people for a peaceful, prosperous, and successful future.

Independence Day is a celebration of the renewal of the Jewish state in the Land of Israel, the birthplace of the Jewish people. In this land, the Jewish people began to develop its distinctive religion and culture some 4,000 years ago, and here it has preserved an unbroken physical presence, for centuries as a sovereign state, at other times under foreign control.

On this 56th Anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel, we recognize that the Israeli people have created one of the leading nations in the fields of science, technology, medicine, and agriculture. The people of Israel have established a vibrant and functioning pluralistic and democratic political system that guarantees the freedoms of speech and press, and free, fair, and open elections with respect for the rule of law. With a strong democracy in a troubled part of the world, Israel has absorbed millions of new immigrants from all over the world. Some of these immigrants arrived without a single possession, but Israel welcomed them by providing housing, education, social security, and health care.

I rise also to condemn the rising tide of anti-Semitism around the globe and to demonstrate the United States' lasting bond of friendship and cooperation with Israel, which has existed for the past 56 years.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in recognizing and paying tribute to the state of Israel as she celebrates her 56th Independence Day and again extend my warmest wishes for a peaceful and prosperous future.

ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. CAROLYN MCCARTHY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of the people of the 4th Congressional District to express my heartfelt congratulations on the 56th anniversary of Israel's Independence Day. Today we celebrate the rebirth of the Jewish State. On this land, thousands of years ago, the Jewish people developed their culture and continue to cultivate it today.

The ideals, which Israelis live with, and for, were enshrined in their declaration of independence and represented by David Ben-Gurion, a leader in the struggle to establish the State of Israel, and the first Prime Minister. He presided over national projects, in order to rapidly develop the country, none more important than the airlift of Jews from other countries. There are over 6.7 million people, over 5.5 million of them Jewish, currently living in Israel.

Faced with constant fear and terror I commend the Israelis for creating and maintaining a viable democracy, founded on liberty, justice, and peace. They have overcome and accomplished so much in a short amount of time. Lasting peace between Israel and its neighbors remains the ultimate goal and peace has been achieved in certain regions. Together, we can make realize the ultimate goal of peace with all of Israel's neighbors and share legitimate security and success.

Mazel Tov!

TRIBUTE TO RETIRING SHERIFF
JOHN HEMEYER

HON. IKE SKELTON

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. SKELTON. Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that my good friend John Hemeyer will retire as Sheriff of Cole County, Missouri. He has held the office since 1986.

Sheriff Hemeyer has had a long and respected career in law enforcement. On the job, he is respected as a co-worker and boss. He has shown concern and a willingness to help those with whom he serves. He has personally touched the lives of countless Cole County residents. He has been described as always willing to enter any situation first, which is an admirable trait for those who serve the community as first responders.

For almost two decades, Sheriff Hemeyer has been willing to let those he serves, the people of Cole County, make the decision as to whether or not he would return as sheriff, and the voters have asked him to stay every time. This year, he has decided to take a well-deserved retirement. His decision to not seek another term was met with sadness and an outpouring of appreciation for his years of dedicated service and a job well done.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure the Members of the House will join me in honoring Sheriff Hemeyer for his years of service and in wishing him all the best in the days ahead.

CONGRATULATING WILLIAM F.
ALDINGER

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. KIRK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my congratulations to a business leader from the 10th Congressional District of Illinois, Mr. William F. Aldinger, CEO of Household International—and now HSBC North America—on his recognition by the Friends of Adam Smith (FOAS) for the 2004 Business Citizen medal tonight.

I have had the pleasure to get to know Bill over the past several years and I am thrilled the FOAS has recognized his leadership in community service, involvement and public policy. By visiting their headquarters in Prospect Heights, Illinois, to learn how they serve over 50 million customers, I have seen how Household has helped empower its employees to play a more active role in politics and good government by conducting internal voter registration drives.

With almost 6,000 employees in Illinois—and 50,000 throughout the United States—I have seen first hand how Household-HSBC is active in their community under Bill's leadership. Whether with Junior Achievement, the American Cancer Society, Neighborhood Housing Services of Chicago, Habitat for Humanity and many more, Household-HSBC employees are constantly working to make their communities better places to live. Finally, I believe the Business Citizen medal is not just an award for Bill Aldinger, but all his employees. Congratulations Bill, and all members of the Household-HSBC North America team, and keep up the great work.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKEY

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VISCLOSKEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in solemn memorial to the estimated 1.5 million men, women, and children who lost their lives during the Armenian Genocide. As in the past, I am pleased to join so many distinguished House colleagues on both sides of the aisle in ensuring that the horrors wrought upon the Armenian people are never repeated.

On April 24, 1915, over 200 religious, political, and intellectual leaders of the Armenian community were brutally executed by the Turkish government in Istanbul. Over the course of the next 8 years, this war of ethnic genocide against the Armenian community in the Ottoman Empire took the lives of over half the world's Armenian population.

Sadly, there are some people who still deny the very existence of this period which saw the institutionalized slaughter of the Armenian people and dismantling of Armenian culture. To those who would question these events, I point to the numerous reports contained in the U.S. National Archives detailing the process that systematically decimated the Armenian population of the Ottoman Empire. However, old records are too easily forgotten—and dismissed. That is why we come together every year at this time: to remember in words what some may wish to file away in archives. This genocide did take place, and these lives were taken. That memory must keep us forever vigilant in our efforts to prevent these atrocities from ever happening again.

I am proud to note that Armenian immigrants found, in the United States, a country where their culture could take root and thrive. Most Armenians in America are children or grandchildren of the survivors, although there are still survivors among us. In my district in Northwest Indiana, a vibrant Armenian-American community has developed and strong ties to Armenia continue to flourish. My predecessor in the House, the late Adam Benjamin, was of Armenian heritage, and his distinguished service in the House serves as an example to the entire Northwest Indiana community. Over the years, members of the Armenian-American community throughout the United States have contributed millions of dollars and countless hours of their time to various Armenian causes. Of particular note are Mrs. Vicki Hovanessian and her husband, Dr. Raffi Hovanessian, residents of Indiana's First

Congressional District, who have continually worked to improve the quality of life in Armenia, as well as in Northwest Indiana. Three other Armenian-American families in my congressional district, Dr. Aram and Mrs. Seta Semerdjian, Dr. Heratch and Mrs. Sonya Doumanian, and Dr. Ara and Mrs. Rosy Yeretsian, have also contributed greatly toward charitable works in the United States and Armenia. Their efforts, together with hundreds of other members of the Armenian-American community, have helped to finance several important projects in Armenia, including the construction of new schools, a mammography clinic, and a crucial roadway connecting Armenia to Nagorno Karabagh.

In the House, I have tried to assist the efforts of my Armenian-American constituency by continually supporting foreign aid to Armenia. This past year, with my support, Armenia received \$84 million in U.S. aid to assist economic and military development. In addition, on April 16, 2004, I joined several of my colleagues in signing the letter to President Bush urging him to honor his pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

The Armenian people have a long and proud history. In the fourth century, they became the first nation to embrace Christianity. During World War I, the Ottoman Empire was ruled by an organization known as the Young Turk Committee, which allied with Germany. Amid fighting in the Ottoman Empire's eastern Anatolian provinces, the historic heartland of the Christian Armenians, Ottoman authorities ordered the deportation and execution of all Armenians in the region. By the end of 1923, virtually the entire Armenian population of Anatolia and western Armenia had either been killed or deported.

While it is important to keep the lessons of history in mind, we must also remain committed to protecting Armenia from new and more hostile aggressors. In the last decade, thousands of lives have been lost and more than a million people displaced in the struggle between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabagh. Even now, as we rise to commemorate the accomplishments of the Armenian people and mourn the tragedies they have suffered, Azerbaijan, Turkey, and other countries continue to engage in a debilitating blockade of this free nation.

Consistently, I have testified before the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee on the important issue of bringing peace to a troubled area of the world. I continued my support for maintaining the level of funding for the Southern Caucasus region of the Independent States (IS), and of Armenia in particular. In addition, on February 26, 2004, I joined several of my colleagues in sending a letter to President Bush urging him to ensure parity in military assistance between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues, Representatives JOE KNOLLENBERG and FRANK PALLONE, for organizing this special order to commemorate the 89th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Their efforts will not only help bring needed attention to this tragic period in world history, but also serve to remind us of our duty to protect basic human rights and freedoms around the world.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. MENENDEZ. Mr. Speaker, today, I am proud to join my colleagues in the United States Congress and world leaders in celebrating the creation of the State of Israel on this 56th anniversary of Israel's Independence Day. On this historic day, we honor the achievements of the Jewish people and the Jewish state, and salute a young and proud nation that has accomplished so much in so little time.

In the 56 years since independence, Israel has welcomed immigrants from all corners of the world as her population grew from 806,000 to 6,780,000 people, including over a million new immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Israel today is a vibrant democracy, the only democracy in the Middle East, and a world leader in technology and agricultural innovation for arid regions.

We must remember that these great achievements have come at a great cost. More than 20,000 Israel Defense Force members have died fighting for the cause of a Jewish state in the years since the war of independence—over 185 Israeli soldiers in the past year alone, since the last Remembrance and Independence Days.

And we must also honor and remember those innocent civilians who have been killed by terrorists trying to destroy the State of Israel and her people. In the last year, at least 176 people were murdered and 906 wounded in terrorist attacks.

On this Day of Independence, the United States of America and Israel stand side-by-side in our commitment to democracy, to peace, and to the State of Israel. The United States will never flinch and will never waiver in its support for the safety and security of the State of Israel and of her people.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO LIEUTENANT COLONEL RICHARD W. LAUGHLIN ON THE OCCASION OF HIS RETIREMENT

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, it is my distinct privilege to stand before my colleagues in the House to pay tribute to a special person in Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. This year, Lieutenant Colonel Richard W. Laughlin, Professor of Military Science and Leadership at Bowling Green State University, will retire after 20 years of distinguished service in the United States Army.

Mr. Speaker, Lieutenant Colonel Laughlin graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in May of 1984. His hard work and dedication at West Point, the Army's pinnacle of leadership, was exceptional. Upon graduation, he branch selected artillery.

LTC Laughlin graduated from the Field Artillery Officers Basic Course in 1985, and his competence and professionalism in that field

served the Nation well as he advanced in rank. Over a period of 8 years, serving at Fort Sill, Oklahoma and at Fort Richardson, Alaska, LTC Laughlin was promoted to first lieutenant and then to captain while serving as Fire Direction Officer, Battery Executive Office, S2, Headquarters Battery Commander, and as assistant S3.

Assigned to the University of Pittsburgh as an assistant professor for military science in 1993, LTC Laughlin was awarded the Governor's Cup for the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania as the best ROTC battalion in the state in 1994. While serving as Chief of Operations for the 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, he was promoted to the rank of major. He then transferred to Fort Hood, Texas to serve as Rear Detachment Commander, 82nd Field Artillery. Under his able leadership, the 82nd trained and deployed thousands of combat-ready soldiers to the Bosnian conflict in 1999.

LTC Laughlin began his current assignment as a Professor of Military Science at BGSU in 2000. Under his guidance, the ROTC program has been forged into a respected hallmark of the University, with program members participating in numerous campus events. LTC Laughlin's 20-year commitment of distinguished service to his country leaves as its legacy a stronger Army of able combat-ready forces, and a generation of students inspired by his dedication and courage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to the steadfast patriotism and unwavering spirit of Lieutenant Colonel Richard C. Laughlin. I am confident that his example will serve as an inspiration to a new generation of soldiers who, like him, will be brave and vigilant guardians for the United States and its citizens. May he now enjoy the freedoms and liberties that he has so ably helped to protect over his distinguished career.

ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask the Members of the House to join us in recognizing past instances of genocide and reaffirming our Nation's commitment to never again allow the perpetration of such atrocities anywhere on this earth. House Resolution 193 appropriately reaffirms America's obligation to international genocide conventions, and underscores the importance of recognizing past crimes against humanity, including the Holocaust and the Armenian, Cambodian, and Rwandan genocides.

We all know that silence in the face of genocide only encourages those who would commit such atrocities in the future. Israel Charney, the noted genocide and Holocaust scholar, has written extensively about the psychology of genocide denial. He has explained to the world what we should all know from history: to deny genocide is to celebrate the mass murder and to endorse the doctrine of corrupt power that brought about the destruction in the first place. To erase agonizing memories of genocide only mocks the sensibilities of the victims and their descend-

ents—in essence, once again, victimize the victims.

For this reason, America must recognize the Turkish massacre and displacement of Armenians as an act of genocide. The House Judiciary Committee, upon its unanimous approval of the Genocide Resolution, described the Armenian Genocide in the following terms:

Beginning in 1915, the Islamic Turkish state of the Ottoman Empire sought to end the collective existence of the Christian Armenian population. From 1915 through 1918, during World War I, the Ottoman Empire subjected the Armenian people to deportation, expropriation, abduction, torture, massacre, and starvation. The atrocities were renewed between 1920 and 1923. It is estimated that one and a half million Armenians were killed out of over two million Armenians who had lived in the Ottoman Empire. It should be noted that these activities ceased with the institution of the new Republic of Turkey in October, 1923.

U.S. recognition of the Armenian genocide is long past due. By failing to admit and recognize atrocities that clearly took place we undermine our Nation's credibility and commitment to combat genocide. On April 24, President Bush issued his annual message in remembrance of the victims of the Armenian Genocide—only he failed to use the word "genocide." In failing to refer to the Armenian Genocide accurately, he has turned his back on his own campaign pledge and on 190 Members of Congress who want the Armenian Genocide recognized.

It is not enough to say "never again." We must take concrete steps to give it meaning and to bolster our own resolve. Passing House Resolution 193 is a small but important step in this ongoing effort to thwart those who would commit genocide. It is the least we can do for the millions who have been killed in Turkey, Germany, Rwanda, and Cambodia. Understanding the lessons of these tragedies will help prevent future crimes against humanity.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate this opportunity to honor the victims of genocide, and to urge my colleagues to always remain cognizant of the pledge our Nation has made to prevent future acts of genocide.

INTRODUCTION OF THE FEDERAL DISASTER CONSUMER PROTECTION ACT

HON. MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO

OF GUAM

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, today I am introducing legislation that would protect the credit histories of consumers residing in areas where damages caused by a disaster impede the efficient payment of debts. My bill would provide an important safeguard for individuals living in disaster-prone regions in order to ensure that their financial histories are not adversely affected by an inability to make prompt payments during and in the immediate aftermath of a Federally Declared Disaster Area.

I am concerned that public law does not provide a consistent legal means for consumers to rectify credit discrepancies occurring during a period in which their residence was included in a Federally Declared Disaster

Area as defined by the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. While I understand that many financial institutions do institute voluntary programs to give such customers reasonable flexibility in making payments, I also understand that these policies are not required nor are they uniform. Additionally, even where voluntary policies are instituted on the part of financial institutions, inevitably some mistakes will be made. The process of reconciling a credit report is often very difficult and time consuming, and disaster victims already face enough burdens during the recovery process.

The Federal Disaster Consumer Protection Act will assist victims of a disaster by allowing for a 7-day grace period beginning on the date on which the disaster area is declared. If the due date on a payment falls on 1 of those 7 days, an affected consumer would be able to request that any adverse credit report as a result of a late payment be removed from his or her credit history. To prevent abuse, the consumer would have to have made his or her account current within 30 days of the due date in order to exercise this protection. This legislation would also give the Secretary of the Treasury discretion to extend the grace period if he or she sees fit.

My bill proposes minimal standards that should not be a burden on those responsible financial institutions that already have a fair policy for dealing with consumers adversely impacted by a disaster. While I do believe that financial institutions should implement fair policies with regard to bank fees and other penalties for late payment during a disaster, my bill does not impose any new regulations with regard to these issues. The sole purpose of this legislation is to protect the consumer's credit. Support for this legislation will help reduce the risk of inaccurate credit reporting impeding the financial recovery of already vulnerable consumers residing in a Federally Declared Disaster Area.

ON THE 56TH ISRAELI INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. DENISE L. MAJETTE

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Ms. MAJETTE. Mr. Speaker, I rise on this Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day celebration, to congratulate the people of Israel in their fifty-sixth year. I would like to recount a brief passage from Yitzchak Rabin, a warrior of peace, upon the occasion of his signing a Declaration of Principles for the Oslo Peace Accords in Washington, in what seems like a forever ago, in 1993. Prime Minister Rabin said then:

We have come from an anguished and grieving land. We have come from a people, a home, a family that has not known a single year, not a single month, in which mothers have not wept for their sons. We have come to try and put an end to the hostilities so that our children, and our children's children, will no longer experience the painful cost of war, violence and terror. We have come to secure their lives and to ease the sorrow and the painful memories of the past, to hope and pray for peace.

On the fifty-sixth birthday of the State of Israel, we are still praying for that peace. Day

after day, hour after hour, we see mothers weep for their sons and daughters. But we no longer see those images as distant—because it has happened here, too, in the United States. We know now that terrorism incurs irreparable pain and loss. The State of Israel has known this loss since its modern beginnings in 1948.

Our loss in the United States connects us to Israel beyond the often symbolic, annual gesture of alliance—we are dear friends, and our friendship runs deep. It is rooted in the values and ideals we share—Israel, a vibrant and passionate democracy which includes respect for diversity and religious freedom for all faiths, mirrors the proud character of the United States.

And so, today, I wish the state of Israel and its citizens a peaceful birthday—last year I had the opportunity to visit Israel for the first time. Upon seeing the sunrise over the old city walls of Jerusalem, I was overwhelmed by the region's history. The leaders and citizens of Israel have yearned to achieve their vision of peace since the modern State of Israel was born. But this vision eludes us still. We cannot let this peaceful image go—we must continually strive to reach it.

Upon its establishment, the first official recognition of the State of Israel came from the United States of America. We have continuously demonstrated our support for Israel—and that support will be strengthened as we endure the pain of terrorism, and fight the battle for a lasting and secure peace, together.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. HENRY A. WAXMAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. WAXMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in honor of Israel Independence Day, Yom Ha'atzmaut, to celebrate the strength of the U.S.-Israel relationship and pay tribute to the people of Israel whose vibrant democracy and brave military stand beside us on the front lines of the war against terrorism.

In the fifty-six years since the establishment of the State of Israel, the United States has worked with Israel to create a wide array of foundations and forums for bilateral cooperation on issues ranging from agriculture, science, energy, and the environment, to the development of technology for military and homeland security needs.

We have also worked hard to build a robust economic relationship. Despite the small size of Israel's population, Israel's GNP is now higher than that of most of its neighbors combined. This is a testament to the openness of the Israeli economy and its high volume of trade with the United States.

Perhaps most fundamental, however, is our work together to advance peace and security in the region. While Israeli peace agreements with Egypt and Jordan are enduring cornerstones of this effort, the refusal of the Palestinian leadership to embrace a peaceful and democratic future remains a painful challenge.

Each year, on the Israeli calendar, the celebration of Yom Ha'atzmaut comes on the heels of Yom Ha'zikaron, Israel's Memorial Day, when the nation expresses its eternal debt and gratitude to the soldiers who gave

their lives for the achievement of the country's independence and its continued existence. Tragically, over the past three years of Palestinian terrorism, hundreds of Israeli civilians have joined those fallen heroes on front lines that now encompass the doorstep of its cafes, buses, and supermarkets.

Although the Palestinians have attempted to justify their hatred as a reaction to Israel's settlement policy or its acts of self defense, the true source of violence is the Palestinian leadership's desire to annihilate the Jewish State even if it sacrifices the dream of Palestinian statehood.

That is why even as the United States remains an honest broker in the effort to reach a final peace settlement, as a nation fighting the threat of terrorism ourselves we must continue to act in solidarity with Israel and on behalf of its right to exist as a secure, democratic, and Jewish state for generations to come.

PAYING TRIBUTE TO THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT SAND DUNES NATIONAL PARK AND PRESERVE

HON. SCOTT MCINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. MCINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the grassroots effort to protect one of Colorado's greatest natural treasures: The Great Sand Dunes. I was privileged to play a part in this momentous and exciting process. My own effort to preserve this beautiful area began in 1989 on a family vacation to the Great Sand Dunes National Monument in Colorado's San Luis Valley, where I had a conversation with my friend Bob Zimmerman about his idea to re-designate the Great Sand Dunes National Monument as a National Park and Preserve. This conversation with Bob was the catalyst for a decade-long effort to put the Sand Dunes in their rightful place alongside the nation's other crown jewels as a National Park and Preserve.

A rare gem, Colorado's Great Sand Dunes cover an area of thirty-nine square miles and reach heights of 700 feet above the floor of the flat San Luis Valley, making them the tallest dune fields in the western hemisphere. The Dunes are nestled between rugged, snowcapped mountains that include 14,000-foot peaks peppered with pristine alpine tundra. The Great Sand Dunes of Colorado are a unique hydrological system that feeds one of Colorado's largest wetland areas and are home to beaver meadows and spacious grasslands that are dotted with beautiful mountain flowers. High mountain streams cascade first into pristine lakes situated above the timberline, flowing into dense spruce and fir forests, streaming farther to reach large Aspen groves, ponderosa forest, pinion-juniper woodlands, cottonwood and mountain willow riparian areas. As the newest member of America's National Park system, the Great Sand Dunes is one of the nation's most biologically diverse parks, encompassing wetland species such as sandhill cranes, the rare white-faced ibis, and Rocky Mountain species of bighorn sheep, marmots and ptarmigan. The park also represents a diverse cultural heritage, where Native American sites spanning thousands of

years, standing Ute Indian wickiups, mammoth kill sites, and a branch of the Old Spanish Trail traveled by some of the earliest Spanish people in America all sit side by side.

The Dunes themselves are a historic product of the wind and rain eroding the Sangre de Cristo and San Juan Mountain ranges that ring the San Luis Valley. For thousands of years prevailing westerly winds have come over the Rockies and down the flood plain of the Rio Grande River, picking up sand particles on the way. These dry surface layers of sand are deposited at the east edge of the valley before the wind rises to cross the Sangre de Cristo Mountains. This continuing process gradually enlarges and changes the shape and sand patterns of the dunes each day. Overall, the dunes maintain a stable form as a result of the combination of wind, topography, and moisture from rain and snow. Another unique feature of the Great Sand Dunes is a small stream called Medano Creek that is fed by melting snow and only flows during spring and early summer along the eastern edge of the dunes before disappearing below ground in the valley. Medano Creek displays a "surge-flow" behavior in that it flows in waves and is the best example of this phenomenon in the world. Under the ground of nearly half the valley is a fundamentally important aquifer that serves as both the principal source of ground water for irrigation and the maintenance of the Dune ecosystem. If the aquifer were even modestly depleted, the rivers and creeks that feed these dunes would dry up. Part of this vital aquifer underlies the scenic open-space Baca Ranch, consisting of 100,000 acres running alongside the Dunes. The expansive Baca Ranch property is critical to the preservation of the fragile Sand Dunes ecosystem and the economic life of the San Luis Valley. Following multiple water battles in the Valley, a plan came together whereby the Baca Ranch could be part of a solution to these water issues while also helping in the park's designation. The Great Sand Dunes National Monument is one of Colorado's greatest natural treasures and I am honored to bring the concerns of the people of the San Luis Valley to the attention of this nation.

The Great Sand Dunes National Park proposal was a ground-up, community driven effort to enhance the status of the Great Sand Dunes National Monument to a National Park and Preserve. The push to preserve the Sand Dunes area began in the 1930's as Elizabeth Spencer and other members of the Chapter V of the P.E.O. Sisterhood in Monte Vista, Colorado circulated petitions and wrote letters to elected officials in Washington to prevent construction and commercial mining companies from hauling off truckloads of sand. All of their hard work resulted in President Herbert Hoover's proclamation creating the Great Sand Dunes National Monument. It wasn't until the fall of 1999 that the movement to crown one of Colorado's natural jewels while preserving the agricultural way of life in the San Luis Valley began to take its next steps. Protecting the great natural environment of the Dunes came out of requests from citizens who represented the San Luis Valley. Several community members contacted me about trying to preserve and protect the Sand Dunes while putting an end to the decades long fight over efforts to export the Valley's water. This input from the local community was critical to the legislative proposal that I planned to draft and introduce at the upcoming Sand Dunes Summit.

In early December of 1999, I invited then Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt, to participate in a public forum at the Great Sand Dunes to announce our efforts to work together on an initiative to re-designate the Sand Dunes as a National Park, and also to solidify the Administration's support for this proposal. Together with U.S. Senator BEN NIGHTHORSE CAMPBELL, U.S. Senator WAYNE ALLARD, and Colorado Attorney General Ken Salazar, I affirmed the importance of acquiring the Baca Ranch property as crucial to the fragile Dune ecosystem and an important step in protecting the water of the San Luis Valley. At the same time, the Nature Conservancy, under the leadership of state director Mark Burget, was considering entering into tough negotiations to purchase the Baca Ranch. I was encouraged by their dedication.

The communities of the San Luis Valley overwhelmingly supported the Great Sand Dunes National Park proposal. For several months following the Summit, I worked with my staff to consult with the communities of the San Luis Valley through town hall meetings over countless working weekends. Our goal was to develop a set of community-generated principles that would serve as the basis for my legislative proposal to Congress for the authorization of the new park.

Before going to work on this proposal in Washington, I sent my staff out in the community to learn the issues better than anyone else, so that the eventual draft legislation would adequately reflect local priorities. Ahead of the Summit, my staff had spent significant time on the ground, meeting with local citizens and officials who were interested in creating the Great Sand Dunes National Park, including county officers, Friends of the Dunes' supporters, the Nature Conservancy, and park officials. The information gathered through these meetings was instrumental in formulating the legislative proposal to create the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. For instance, one of the priorities voiced locally was the need to preserve the ability of the Colorado Division of Wildlife to manage the big horn sheep population. That required some creative problem solving, since typically hunting is not allowed in a park. That's where we came up with the idea to create a nature preserve, managed by the National Park Service, that would protect the aspects, such as the hydrology, that make the park unique, while also allowing for the hunting needed to manage the big horn sheep population.

Another creative idea that was implemented in the proposal was the designation of the Baca National Wildlife Refuge. That designation allowed for different management regimes than a national park. It was envisioned for land diverse enough to be managed for wildlife (including the overpopulated elk), while also flexible enough to account for an area that could support significant migratory bird populations, such as waterfowl, cranes and shorebirds, through continuation of many of the Ranch's irrigation practices. In this way, the park could become an economic draw in and of itself. Additionally, I listened to the wishes of the citizens of Saguache County who were concerned about the potential for traffic congestion created by a possible northern entrance to the park. I decided to include a locally driven advisory council that could be a platform for ensuring that these local concerns were considered when the management

of the future park was being crafted. I was also able to offer the Forest Service some incentives to support the bill. While the Forest Service was very reluctant to give up the land that it was currently managing in what was to become the preserve, I was able to offer them the chance to manage the area of the Baca Ranch that includes the mountains, specifically the 14,000+-foot Kit Carson Peak. This helped ease some management headaches because of travel restrictions across the Baca Ranch that broke up the continuity of the forest and notably the 14,000-foot ridge. This enticement helped to eventually convince the Forest Service to support the goals of the legislation.

Finally, the most important part of this process was the innovative way in which my staff and I offered to protect the hydrologic resources of the area with an approach that respected the local water interests. This was a unique and creative effort to give the federal government the ability to protect the water in a manner that made everyone comfortable with the process. This is perhaps the lynchpin of the legislation, and one of the primary reasons for the bill. After all, it is the interwoven hydrologic system in the San Luis Valley that creates the Dunes themselves. In fact, without the water to move the sand back down to the dunes and create the conditions for the dunes themselves, the Valley's agriculture and Colorado's largest concentration of wetlands would cease to exist. It is important to remember that the San Luis Valley had just gone through a lengthy and expensive water fight with American Water Development Incorporated and Stockman's Water—a battle that led to two ballot initiatives in 1998 that the Valley worked together to defeat. As a result of that effort, the provisions in this bill that offered a way to protect the Dunes and the water and agriculture in the Valley ensured our success.

On March 28, 2000 I introduced H.R. 4095, a bill to establish the Great Sand Dunes National Preserve and authorize the Secretary of the Interior to re-designate the Great Sand Dunes National Monument as a National Park. This legislation was well received in the local community, where numerous organizations passed resolutions or wrote letters in support of my bill. My staff and I worked with members of the Administration, along with State and local government officials to bring this important legislation to the attention of my colleagues in the Congress. Without the support of many of these organizations and numerous dedicated individuals, this legislation would never have become law.

I am grateful for the support of several individuals who worked with us to make this legislation a reality. Christine Canaly of the San Luis Valley Ecosystems Council, a retired Adams State College professor and president of the Friends of the Dunes organization; Hobey Dixon, whose efforts to elevate the dunes and save the ecosystem, with special attention to keeping the water in the San Luis Valley, were instrumental to building a coalition of local support. Mike Gibson, former head of the Nature Conservancy's San Luis Valley Project; Ray Wright, the Chairman of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District; Ralph Curtis, the manager of the Rio Grande Water Conservation District. Ralph, along with the rest of the Colorado water community, were helpful in working with us to creatively forge consensus solutions to the water issues central to the ecosystem and the Valley's

economy. Their suggestions helped us to push for the purchase of the Baca Ranch property that is crucial to maintaining the fragile Dunes ecosystem. Mike Blenden, the local manager for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, played a significant role in helping me to craft the "Refuge" portion of the bill. Steve Chaney, who serves as superintendent of the Great Sand Dunes National Monument and Preserve, was also an invaluable source of support and dedication throughout the entire process. I was fortunate to receive the support of Colorado State Legislators Gigi Dennis and Lewis Entz, who teamed up to pass a resolution in the Colorado legislature that supported our efforts to create the new National Park and Preserve. My staff and I were also grateful for the dedication of various individuals from the Governor's office and the Colorado State Land Board, who worked with us to help structure the finances of the Baca Ranch land purchase. The Action 22 organization also passed a supportive resolution encouraging the park's re-designation. However, this legislation could never have been successful without the initial support of the grass-roots efforts of people like local organizer Dion Stewart, Rio Grande County Commissioners Randall Brown, Doug Davie, and Vern Rominger, Alamosa County Commissioners Darius Allen, Charlotte Bobicki, and Bob Zimmerman, and citizens throughout the region.

Despite this overwhelming support from state and local officials, neighboring communities and statewide organizations, H.R. 4095 had opposition from two of Colorado's U.S. Congressional Representatives from Teller County and Eastern Colorado, whose disagreements centered on concerns over control of water usage in Colorado and a belief that the Great Sand Dunes National Monument was not on par with our other national parks.

In response to the clear intentions of the Representative from Teller County to kill the legislation through the Committee process in the U.S. House of Representatives, it became clear that we would have to try another route. I went to Senator WAYNE ALLARD and worked out a strategy with him to pass an identical measure in the Senate. Senator ALLARD quickly agreed and S. 2547 was introduced on May 11, 2000. Within a month, the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources held a Subcommittee hearing and a full Committee mark-up. On October 5, 2000 the U.S. Senate unanimously passed S. 2547. Pursuant to a prior arrangement with the Speaker of the House, the following day the Senate-passed version of my bill was received in the House and held at the desk for subsequent consideration on the Floor. This parliamentary procedure is very unusual. On October 24, I debated well into the evening with my opposing colleague about the merits of the bill. I welcomed the support that I received from other members of the Colorado Congressional delegation, who spoke in favor of this legislation on the Floor. However, given the Representatives position on the Resources Committee at the time, we couldn't take anything for granted. That evening, after the debate, I had my staff personally deliver a "Dear Colleague" letter from me to each Member of Congress asking that they support my Sand Dunes bill, which would be voted on the next day.

On October 25, 2000, by a vote of 366 to 34, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved the legislation. On November

22, 2000, the President signed the legislation designating the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve into law.

I was overjoyed with the enactment of our legislation, but I also knew that, in order to make sure the monument made the transition to a national park, the essential Baca Ranch property would need to be incorporated into the park. My staff and I have continued to work with the Nature Conservancy to stave off a few procedural battles and have asked for the necessary appropriations to acquire the funds necessary for the purchase of the Baca Ranch and the transfer of ownership from the Nature Conservancy to the federal government. As of April of 2004, we have managed to acquire all but roughly \$3 million of the funding needed to go towards the closing costs to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which is the last step in re-designating the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve. My staff and I have, in conjunction with U.S. Senator BEN NIGHORSE CAMPBELL, already made the request for the final appropriation. We are encouraged by the resolve of all of our supporters in this final step. It has been a long journey and I especially want to thank all of those devoted individuals and organizations that have worked with me to make this initiative a legislative success. The designation of this park is a tribute to the natural beauty of Colorado and the hard work of numerous capable and committed people. The realization of our goal is in sight, and I hope that in the very near future we will achieve our common dream of creating the Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve.

I'd like to thank Elizabeth Peetz of my staff who helped compile the history of these efforts.

ISRAEL AND THE UNITED STATES ON ISRAEL'S 56TH INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I wish to congratulate Israel on its Independence Day, the 56th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel. In 56 years, Israel has experienced more dangers and more triumphs, more success and more tragedy, more highs and lows than many states that have existed for many centuries longer. Throughout it all, Israel's indomitable spirit has conquered adversity.

Israel has much for which to be grateful. Foremost, Israel has so often been blessed with great leaders, with wise and visionary leadership. This tradition goes back to Israel's modern origins. At the end of the nineteenth century, the founder of the modern Zionist movement Theodor Herzl made the most preposterous and prophetic prediction I know of, when he asserted that a Jewish state would be born within a half-century. He made that prediction in 1897, when virtually nobody took the idea seriously. Fifty-one years later, in 1948, the state of Israel was founded.

In statehood, Israel's leaders have been practical, humane, bold, and peace-loving. It is a pity that Israel's neighbors generally have not been blessed with leaders of a similar type.

Mr. Speaker, David Ben-Gurion and the Zionist leadership were practical enough to accept the 1947 U.N. partition resolution, though they had hoped for much more. They were humane enough to treat their Arab citizens as equals when Arab leaders were threatening to drive the Jews into the sea. They and their successors were bold enough to do what is necessary to keep Israel and the Jewish people alive, regardless of what the rest of the world might think.

Usually, the world decides much later that Israel was right after all. Remember the bombing—the then much criticized bombing—of the Iraqi nuclear reactor Osirak in 1981? How universally scorned it was at the time. At that time, I was the only Member of the Congress to commend Israel for its action. How grateful the civilized world is now for Israel's bold move in 1981.

Once again, courageous Israeli leadership has come to the fore. As I speak, I have no idea whether Prime Minister Sharon's plan for unilateral redeployment from Gaza and parts of the West Bank will be accepted by the Israeli people, government, and Knesset. I do know that Prime Minister Sharon's plan demonstrates a clear commitment to establishing a structure of peace in the absence of a viable Palestinian peace partner. And I do know that the Israeli verdict on that plan will be arrived at democratically.

Mr. Speaker, Israel also has been blessed with the great friendship and unswerving support of the United States. It has earned this friendship not only because of shared strategic interests but also because Israel has fashioned a society that embodies the same fundamental values as our own.

Against impossible odds, Israel has established a vibrant, open, prosperous, free, and fully democratic society; a pluralistic society built by people from virtually every country in the world; a society that is politically, economically, and intellectually on a par with the best of the West. In fact, the Arab population of Israel enjoys incomparably more freedom and democratic rights than do those who live anywhere in the Arab world.

Mr. Speaker, the past four years have been among the most dangerous in the history of the State of Israel. The scale of Israeli loss in the so-called intifada is staggering—much of it the result of suicide bombings.

Israel should know that its friends in the United States stand in complete solidarity with it in its fight against terrorism. Its friends here will defend its right to protect itself against all forms of terrorism, against the scourge of those who place no value on human life. Its friends fully understand and support Israel's right to build a security fence to keep out suicide bombers. And Israel should know that its friends here won't be afraid to stand up to unjustified and disturbingly persistent criticism coming from Europe, from those who have managed to misunderstand the lessons of their own history.

And Israel should rest assured that its friends here agree that violence must end before negotiations begin. You cannot negotiate with terror; you can only defeat it. Only when the Palestinians learn that they cannot exhaust Israel through violence will they be ready for the kinds of political compromises necessary for a lasting peace. Israel's friends understand that.

Mr. Speaker, for Israel's friends, today is a day for joy, solidarity, and reflection. As we

join with our Israeli friends to celebrate the remarkable story of Israeli independence, we take special pride in the role our nation has played and continues to play in supporting Israeli security and in promoting the special bilateral relationship from which our nations have derived great and mutual benefit.

IN RECOGNITION OF EUNICE W. JOHNSON

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to Eunice W. Johnson, a nationally known business leader and humanitarian. On May 2, 2004, she will address the 129th Commencement Exercises at Talladega College in Talladega, Alabama.

Eunice Johnson is a graduate of Talladega College with a B.A. degree in sociology and a minor in art. She grew up in Selma, Alabama, where her father, Dr. Nathaniel Walker, was a physician, and her mother, Mrs. Ethel Walker, was the principal of the high school and taught education and art at the college level at Selma University. Following graduation from Talladega College, Eunice Johnson earned her Master's degree in social work from Loyola University in Chicago. She also studied journalism at Northwestern University and interior decorating at the Ray School of Design.

Mrs. Johnson is the secretary-treasurer of Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., which was founded by her husband, John H. Johnson, in 1942. Johnson Publishing Company publishes *Ebony* and *Jet* magazines and is the largest Black-owned publishing company in the world. Since 1961, she has been producer and director of *Ebony Fashion Fair*, the world's largest traveling fashion show, which has donated over \$49 million to the United Negro College Fund and other African-American charities. Out of her involvement in *Ebony Fashion Fair*, Mrs. Johnson created *Fashion Fair Cosmetics*, which is a world leader in cosmetics and skin care for women of color.

Eunice Johnson has been an active member of many community organizations in the Chicago area where she lives. She has received the Outstanding Black College University Alumnus Award from the Alabama A&M University Alumni Association and the Honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters from Talladega College and Shaw University. She is a Golden Life Member of Delta Sigma Theta and a member of the Advisory Board of the Harvard Graduate School of Business.

I am proud to recognize one of the most distinguished and successful alumni of Talladega College, Eunice W. Johnson, as she addresses the graduating class of 2004, and appreciate the House's attention to this important matter today.

CONGRATULATING GEORGE AND GERMAINE BRIANT

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize George and Germaine Briant, of

Hammond, LA. George and Germaine were married on July 20, 1921. Having spent over 80 years together, I am proud to honor George and Germaine as Louisiana's longest married couple.

George Briant is a World War I veteran. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the French Legion of Honor due to his outstanding service to this country. Following in his father's footsteps, their son George fought in World War 11. In 1945 at the age of 25, George was killed during the filming of a movie while on leave from his military duties.

On February 14, 2003, the Briants were recognized by the Louisiana Family Forum as the longest married couple in Louisiana. A dinner was also held in honor of the Briants at the Louisiana Governor's Mansion last year. George and Germaine currently reside at Live Oak Village in Hammond, where they are often seen happily spending all of their time together.

I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to personally commend and honor the marriage of George and Germaine Briant. They serve as living examples of lifelong commitment, love, courage, and faith. Again, congratulations to George and Germaine on 80 years of marriage. I wish you a very Happy Anniversary.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mark the anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel and to pay tribute to those who have given their lives for the achievement of the country's independence and its continued existence.

Israel's Independence Day comes just 8 days after the Holocaust Remembrance Day which is the day that has been set aside for remembering the victims of the Holocaust and for contemplating what can happen to civilized people when bigotry, hatred, and indifference reign. Lost 2 thousand years earlier, Jewish independence was restored in 1948 with the establishment of the State of Israel. Independence Day is a celebration of the renewal of the Jewish state and allows the Jewish people to continue development of their distinctive religion and culture.

However, their independence has come at a price. The State of Israel has faced obstacles and challenges to its very survival, with conventional military attacks leading the way to suicide bombers who have killed innocent Israeli men, women, and children. Through these adversities, Israel has endured with continued strength, conviction, and faith. As the only democracy in the region, it serves as a model for its neighbors and provides hope for the future. As the United States had to face the harsh realities of terrorism following the unthinkable attacks on our country on September 11, 2001, the bond between our nations has never been stronger.

Mr. Speaker, the commemoration of the independence of Israel is an important reminder of the contributions of Israel to democracy worldwide. Today, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating Israel's independence

and to pay tribute to the fallen men, women, and children that have died in Israel's continued struggle for independence and democracy.

COMMEMORATING THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, as a proud member of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, and the representative of a large and vibrant community of Armenian Americans, I rise today to join my colleagues in the sad commemoration of the Armenian Genocide.

Today, we continue the crusade to ensure that this tragedy is never forgotten. This 89th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide is an emotional time. The loss of life experienced by so many families is devastating. But, in the face of the systematic slaughter of 1.5 million people, the Armenian community has persevered with a vision of life and freedom.

Armenian Americans are representative of the resolve, bravery, and strength of spirit that is so characteristic of Armenians around the world. That strength carried them through humanity's worst: Upheaval from a homeland of 3,000 years, massacre of kin, and deportation to foreign lands. That same strength gathers Armenians around the world to make certain that this tragedy is never forgotten.

Without recognition and remembrance, this atrocity remains a threat to nations around the world. I've often quoted philosopher George Santayana who said: "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it." And to remember, we must first acknowledge what it is—Genocide.

Tragically, more than 1.5 million Armenians were systematically murdered at the hands of the Young Turks. More than 500,000 were deported. It was brutal. It was deliberate. It was an organized campaign and it lasted more than 8 years. We must make certain that we remember.

Now, we must ensure that the world recognizes that Armenian people have remembered, and they have survived and thrived.

Out of the crumbling Soviet Union, the Republic of Armenia was born, and independence was gained. But, independence has not ended the struggle.

To this day, the Turkish government denies that genocide of the Armenian people occurred and denies its own responsibility for the deaths of 1.5 million people.

In response to this revisionist history, the Republic of France passed legislation that set the moral standard for the international community. The French National Assembly unanimously passed a bill that officially recognizes the massacre of 1.5 million Armenians in Turkey during and after WWI as genocide.

Several nations have since joined in the belief that history should beset straight. Canada, Argentina, Belgium, Lebanon, The Vatican, Uruguay, the European parliament, Russia, Greece, Sweden and France, have authored declarations or decisions confirming that the genocide occurred. As a country, we must join these nations in recognition of this atrocity.

I am proud to join more than 100 of my colleagues in cosponsoring H. Res. 193, which emphasizes the importance of remembering and learning from past crimes against humanity. We must demand that the United States officially acknowledge the forced exile and annihilation of 1.5 million people as genocide.

Denying the horrors of those years merely condones the behavior in other places as was evidenced in Rwanda, Indonesia, Burundi, Sri Lanka, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Iraq. Silence may have been the signal to perpetrators of these atrocities that they could commit genocide, deny it, and get away with it.

As Americans, the reminder of targeted violence and mass slaughter is still raw. We lost nearly 3,000 people on September 11. I cannot imagine the world trying to say that this did not occur. The loss of 1.5 million people is a global tragedy.

A peaceful and stable South Caucasus region is clearly in the U.S. national interest. Recognizing the genocide must be a strategy for this goal in an increasingly uncertain region. One of the most important ways in which we can honor the memory of the Armenian victims of the past is to help modern Armenia build a secure and prosperous future.

The United States has a unique history of aid to Armenia, being among the first to recognize that need, and the first to help. I am pleased with the U.S. involvement in the emphasis of private sector development, regionally focused programs, people-to-people linkages and the development of a civil society.

I recently joined many of my colleagues in requesting funding for Armenia including for Foreign Military Financing, for Economic Support Funds, and for assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia has made impressive progress in rebuilding a society and a nation in the face of dramatic obstacles. I will continue to take a strong stand in support of Armenia's commitment to democracy, the rule of law, and a market economy—I am proud to stand with Armenia in doing so. But there is more to be done. Conflict persists in the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

Congress has provided funding for confidence building in that region, and I will continue my support of that funding and the move toward a brighter future for Armenia. But in building our future, we must not forget our past. That is why I strongly support the efforts of the Armenian community in the construction of the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum. Because so many Armenians have spoken of the destruction, they have made certain that we remember.

Nothing we can do or say will bring those who perished back to life, but we can imbue their memories with everlasting meaning by teaching the lessons of the Armenian genocide to the next generation and help Armenia build its future.

IN RECOGNITION OF KIDS DAY AMERICA/INTERNATIONAL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the "Kids Day

America" event in Anniston, AL, to be held this year on May 15, 2004. "Kids Day America" is in its 10th year and is a special day set aside across the nation to address health, safety, and environmental issues that affect us as individuals and as a community. Wade Clinic of Chiropractic of Anniston is the official chiropractic office representing the event.

This year in Anniston, "Kids Day America" will benefit the Wellness Education Foundation, a national nonprofit organization formed for the purpose of educating communities across the country about wellness issues. The Anniston Police Department is bringing McGruff, the Crime Dog; the Calhoun County Sheriff's Department will be present to fingerprint ID children; the Calhoun County LINC Program will be presenting parenting workshops; the Health Department will be distributing information; and the Alabama Power Company will be presenting their "SafetyOpolus."

More than 1500 communities have participated in "Kids Day America." With the help and support of thousands of local police departments, county sheriff offices, dentists, and photographers who volunteer, the children who attend will be able to complete their own Child Safety ID cards.

I salute "Kids Day America" for the service it provides and commend Wade Clinic of Chiropractic of Anniston, Alabama, for its sponsorship of this event on May 15, 2004.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ISRAEL ON ITS NATIONAL DAY

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the people of Israel who celebrate their Independence Day today in accordance with the Hebrew calendar. Fifty-six years ago, on May 14 1948, the Jewish people proclaimed the establishment of their own state and Israel was born. After hundreds of years of diaspora and persecution and three years after the full horrors of the holocaust were disclosed to the world, the Jewish people were finally able to return to the land of their biblical roots.

The Israeli and the American people have had a special relationship ever since 1948. President Harry S Truman was the first head of state to recognize the new country. He had always seen the extraordinary connection of the American people and the Jewish population in the Middle East. In his memoirs he stressed that both the Americans and the Jews in the Near East were pioneers who turned unexploited lands into powerful engines of growth. Under the hard working hands and the sweat of the Jewish people, the bleak desert started to bloom and within years of its existence the state of Israel became an economical developed country which attracted immigrants from all over the world.

Even before the state of Israel was established, President Truman foresaw that the Jewish state would be a stable democracy with values similar to those of the United States. Truman admired Israel's first President Chaim Weizmann as a great statesman and the relationship of these two men was one of mutual understanding and respect. These sen-

timents are still dominant between Americans and Israelis today.

Israel has had to fight against external foes from the very beginning of its existence. With great bravery, the Israeli people have been defending their country for 56 years and have lost more than 21,700 soldiers and thousands of civilians in this struggle. Yesterday, the Israeli people observed a special annual day of remembrance for the victims of this fight. I want to express my sympathy to the people of Israel for their human losses in the past and in the present. The American people are deeply concerned about the ongoing conflict between the Palestinians and the Israelis and hope that these two people will soon find a way to live together in peace.

I wish the Israeli people a peaceful and cheerful Independence Day. They have every reason to be proud of their country.

ON THE LOSS OF LANCE CORPORAL MATTHEW K. SERIO

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sorrow that I rise to recognize the death of Lance Corporal Matthew K. Serio, a brave Marine who served with dignity and honor in Iraq. I join his family and the people of Rhode Island in mourning this great loss.

On Monday, April 5, Lance Corporal Serio was killed by enemy fire during combat operations near Fallujah, Iraq. A member of Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, Lance Corporal Serio was serving his second tour of duty in Iraq. He graduated from North Providence High School in 2001, where he distinguished himself as a member of the football team. After graduation, he pursued a lifelong dream and immediately enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I extend my deepest condolences to his parents Anthony and Sharon, his younger brother Chris, and his older brother A.J., who serves in the Navy. The people of North Providence and Rhode Island have demonstrated their love and appreciation for Matthew's sacrifice and have spoken highly of his contributions to their lives. Those who knew him well recalled his friendliness and compassion, as well as his patriotism and love of service.

His loss causes us to reflect on the bravery demonstrated by our men and women in uniform as they carry out their obligations in the face of danger. When their nation called them to duty to preserve freedom, liberty and the security of their neighbors, they answered without hesitation. We remember those who have fallen not only as soldiers, but also as patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. May we keep their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers as they struggle to endure this difficult period and mourn the heroes America has lost.

We will continue to hope for the safe and speedy return of all of our troops serving throughout the world.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE DONOHO SCHOOL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to The Donoho School in Anniston, Alabama, on the occasion of the celebration of the school's 40th anniversary on Friday, May 7, 2004.

The Donoho School is an independent, college-preparatory day school in Anniston, Alabama, enrolling 366 students in pre-kindergarten through grade twelve. It was founded as a secondary institution in 1963 and chartered under the name of The Anniston Academy. In 1976, the name was changed to The Donoho School in recognition of Mrs. Harriet Wallis Donoho, a founder and benefactor of the school.

The Donoho School's mission is to provide a quality college-preparatory education to capable, highly motivated students. It is committed to the development of the total child by providing a challenging curriculum in an atmosphere conducive to good citizenship, personal integrity and devout religious principles. The school's academic, athletics, fine arts and other student activities are designed to fulfill this commitment.

As the Congressional representative for Anniston, Alabama, I have long been aware of the outstanding reputation The Donoho School holds in the local community and surrounding areas. I am proud to salute this fine school on its 40th anniversary.

CONGRATULATING DOROTHY NORIEA

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Dorothy Noriea, of Mandeville, Louisiana. Dorothy has been named the Louisiana Breast Cancer Task Force's Board Member of the Year.

After being diagnosed with breast cancer in the summer of 1998, Dorothy underwent a lumpectomy, mastectomy, chemotherapy and radiation and completed treatment in 1999. Dorothy has since served as a member Louisiana Breast Cancer Task Force, an organization which puts forth an immeasurable amount of effort in working towards a cure for breast cancer.

In addition to her work with the Louisiana Breast Cancer Task Force, Dorothy also serves on the Board of the Mandeville PTA, the Greater Covington Junior League, the Beau Chene Garden Club, and the Presbyterian Women's Club. Her invaluable service to the community shows her to be selfless and full of strength and courage.

I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to personally commend and honor Dorothy Noriea on being named the Louisiana's Breast Cancer Task Force's Board Member of the Year. I am honored that we as members of the U.S. Congress are able to recognize a woman who has been through so

much in her own personal life yet still manages to give so much to the community. She deserves tremendous acknowledgement and appreciation for all that she has contributed to the citizens of Louisiana.

Again, I would like to thank Dorothy Noriea for so honorably representing the state of Louisiana.

COMMEMORATION OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

HON. JERRY F. COSTELLO

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. COSTELLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to the victims of one of history's most terrible tragedies, the Armenian Genocide.

April 24, 1915 is remembered and solemnly commemorated each year by the Armenian community and others throughout the world. On that day, Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were arrested in Constantinople, taken to the interior of Turkey and murdered. In the years that followed, Armenians living under Ottoman rule were systematically deprived of their homes, property, freedom, dignity, and ultimately their lives. By 1923, 1.5 million Armenians had been massacred and 500,000 more had been deported.

The Armenian Genocide is a historical fact, despite the efforts of some to minimize its scope and deny its occurrence. Many of the survivors of the genocide came to the United States, where they and their descendants have contributed to our society in countless ways. In my district, there is a significant population of Armenian survivors and their families that showed heroic courage and a will to survive. With faith and courage, generations of Armenians have overcome great suffering and proudly preserved their culture, traditions, and religion and have told the story of the genocide to an often indifferent world. As Members of Congress and people of conscience, we must work to overcome the indifference and distortions of history, and ensure that future generations know what happened.

Mr. Speaker, genocide is the most potent of all crimes against humanity because it is an effort to systematically wipe out a people and a culture as well as individual lives. Denying that genocide took place when there are recorded accounts of barbarity and ethnic violence is an injustice. This was a tragic event in human history, but by paying tribute to the Armenian community we ensure the lessons of the Armenian genocide are properly understood and acknowledged. I am pleased my colleagues and I have this opportunity to ensure this tragedy is remembered.

CELEBRATION OF ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. MALONEY. Mr. Speaker, today we commemorate Yom Ha'Atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day. For 56 years, Israel has been

forced by its neighbors and many in the international community to fight for the right to exist. As the only country in the region with a popularly elected democracy, Israel remains our staunchest ally.

In the face of continuous terror, citizens of Israel try to lead a normal life. However, they remain haunted by acts of violence that they have witnessed. Sadly, many have felt the anguish of knowing someone who has been murdered. Many are afraid to ride buses, sit in cafes, or visit outdoor markets. The pursuit of happiness, often taken for granted in the United States, is summarily abridged by those that seek to destroy Israel.

The majority of Israeli citizens desire peace with their neighbors. They want to be free from terrorist attacks and free from the constant fear that plagues them. On this day, Yom Ha'Atzmaut, we must pledge to work to further the goal of peace in the Middle East and ensure the continued existence of the lone representative democracy in the region, our friend and ally, Israel. Let us not forget that this is a day of celebration for Israelis who commemorate the establishment of Israel with great joy. Against all odds, the fledgling Jewish State has survived and grown into a stable, economically strong country.

TRIBUTE TO NATIONAL ETHNIC COALITION OF ORGANIZATIONS

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased today to pay tribute to an outstanding humanitarian organization, the National Ethnic Coalition of Organizations. NECO, as it is better known, celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.

NECO's mandate is simple but powerful, universal in scope and humanitarian in purpose. It seeks to preserve ethnic diversity, promote equality and tolerance, combat injustice and bring about harmony and unity among all peoples.

Since its founding in 1984 this multi-ethnic coalition has taken leadership in the promotion of diversity and has sponsored programs, activities and educational initiatives designed to break through the walls of ethnic misunderstanding and ignorance.

I am especially pleased and proud in this tribute to acknowledge the inspirational leadership and tireless work of NECO's Chairman and a good friend, William Denis Fugazy. Bill has been the leader of NECO throughout these 20 years and in that role has become one of our nation's most respected humanitarian leaders and a dedicated visionary, who constantly works to promote brotherhood and respect between all citizens.

NECO's most distinct program is familiar to many of you and to the general public. Each year since 1986, NECO has awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. It honors Americans of various ethnic origins for their outstanding contributions to this country. It is an award that has been bestowed on all American Presidents since 1986 as well as Nobel Prize winners, leaders in entertainment, business and science and a number of members of Congress on a bi-partisan basis. I was proud

in 2001 to cosponsor a resolution which passed the House and Senate to recognize the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.

Beyond the Ellis Island Medals, NECO has provided leadership in a wide range of humanitarian and national civic work. This includes raising more than \$1 million to renovate and refurbish the Immigrant Wall of Honor on Ellis Island, a wall which contains the names of more than 200,000 immigrants to the United States who first aimed to begin the American dream on Ellis Island.

One of the best-known of NECO's programs is the Forum Children's Foundation. This project involves sponsoring children from various third world nations who are in need of urgent medical assistance to come to the United States and receive this care. To date more than 30 children have been provided with surgeries and related care that could be characterized as either life saving or life changing in nature. The Foundation assumes the responsibility for the costs associated with the care and the transportation necessary to receive it. In this endeavor they have made a genuine difference in the lives of not only the children but their families as well.

NECO in its history has been deeply involved as an advocate to combat the rising local, state, and national problem of hate crimes. It began in response to one of the most heinous of all hate crimes that was committed against James Byrd in Texas. NECO in addition to helping the Byrd family with the funeral costs, also established two scholarships a year in conjunction with the James Byrd Jr. Foundation for Racial Healing. NECO has worked closely with the sponsors of comprehensive hate crime prevention legislation in both the House and the Senate working to educate and inform the Congress about the need to prevent hate crimes by providing law enforcement with adequate resources and responsibility. Today in our nation we average nearly 25 hate crimes a day and it is obvious that we must do more to combat the problem.

NECO is constant in its efforts to combat negative ethnic and racial stereotyping. This has included work with the Family Exchange Peace Program. This program brings thousands of school children and their families together to raise awareness about the diverse racial and ethnic heritage of New York City as well as to encourage racial, ethnic and cultural harmony.

NECO also is responsible for one of the most important Italian American organizations, the Coalition of Italo-American Associations. The Coalition representing 143 organizations around the nation with a membership of some 1.5 million works in conjunction with NECO on the key mission to fight discrimination including negative media stereotyping, and to spotlight the contributions which Italian Americans make and continue to make to America.

NECO also is responsible for the Forum Club, a leading business organization in New York City, which sponsors monthly high-level programs with prominent speakers from government, media and business.

Over the past 20 years NECO has distinguished itself in many humanitarian programs and initiatives. It has stayed true to its mission to promote the strength of diversity and to promote understanding and harmony. Its positive mission and message is challenged so often by some harsh realities of modern society such as hate crimes and discrimination, yet

NECO's strength of character and sense of commitment has been unwavering.

It is a special honor for me to recognize NECO and its great work these past twenty years. I salute NECO's leadership including its Board of Directors, staff and volunteers and most especially their Chairman, Bill Fugazy. NECO is an outstanding model of an organization which does so well by doing such good.

THE LOSS OF MASTER SERGEANT RICHARD L. FERGUSON

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, it is with profound sorrow that I rise to recognize the death of Master Sergeant Richard L. Ferguson, United States Army—a brave soldier who served with dignity and honor in Iraq. I join his family and the people of Rhode Island in mourning this great loss.

On Tuesday, March 30, Master Sergeant Ferguson was killed in Samarra, Iraq, when the vehicle in which he was riding overturned in a non-hostile incident. He served with 2nd Battalion, 10th Special Forces Group out of Fort Carson, Colorado. Raised in Coventry, Rhode Island, Master Sergeant Ferguson joined the Army at the age of 17 and served his nation honorably as a member of the elite Special Forces. His assignments sent him around the globe on important and challenging missions, and it was while stationed in Germany that he met his wife, Marianne. Marianne now lives in Colorado with their children, Jonathan, Jordan, and Jason.

Master Sergeant Ferguson's many years in the Army demonstrate his dedication to our nation's freedom, a belief shared by others in his family that were also called to service; his father, Lee F. Ferguson, Sr., served in Korea, his brother, Lee Jr., was a member of the 82nd Airborne, and his brother Eric is in the Air National Guard. Richard Ferguson also leaves a sister, JoAnn Phillips of Coventry, and a daughter, Audrey. Those who knew him well spoke highly of his love of his family, and his patriotism. He was described as a leader who demonstrated humility, commitment and courage.

His loss causes us to reflect on the bravery demonstrated by our men and women in uniform as they carry out their obligations in the face of danger. When their nation called them to duty to preserve freedom, liberty and the security of their neighbors, they answered without hesitation. We remember those who have fallen not only as soldiers, but also as patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. May we keep their loved ones in our thoughts and prayers as they struggle to endure this difficult period and mourn the heroes America has lost.

We will continue to hope for the safe and speedy return of all of our troops serving throughout the world.

IN RECOGNITION OF PIEDMONT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S STUDENT COUNCIL

HON. MIKE ROGERS

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ROGERS of Alabama. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of Piedmont Elementary School of Piedmont, Alabama. This fine elementary school has established a Student Council in order to teach its students the importance of government and the democratic principles. As I read the letters of some of its young officers, I know that this experiment has been successful. These young people, under the leadership of student council sponsors Miss Leslie Gary and Mrs. Melinda Whaley, are indeed a credit to their school, their community and their state.

As a reward for their service on the Piedmont Elementary School Student Council and to further their education about our American government, these students will be traveling to Washington, D.C., on April 27 to May 1, 2004. The Alabama Legislature has designated them as "Ambassadors of Goodwill."

I welcome these Alabama Ambassadors of Goodwill and their principal, John H. McGill, as the Piedmont Elementary School Student Council visits our Nation's Capital. I salute these young people for their accomplishments.

THANKING SISTER IMELDA FOR THIRTY-FIVE YEARS OF GUID- ANCE, SERVICE, AND LEADER- SHIP

HON. DAVID VITTER

OF LOUISIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VITTER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Sister Imelda Moriarty, Principal of St. Catherine of Siena School in Metairie, Louisiana. Sister Imelda is retiring after thirty-five years of teaching at St. Catherine. She is a pillar of the Louisiana educational community and will be sorely missed.

Sister Imelda began teaching at St. Catherine of Siena School in 1969 with a class of forty-one students. She became principal in 1974, and she will retire as principal in May of 2004. Since the arrival of Sister Imelda, St. Catherine has become the largest nonpublic school in Louisiana.

Generation after generation of children from the New Orleans area have attended and will attend St. Catherine. Under the guidance of Sister Imelda, thousands of students have received excellent educations and have become positive contributors to their communities. More importantly, these students have developed a moral, ethical and spiritual foundation to help guide them through life. It is through Sister Imelda's faith that she has become such a positive and powerful source in the lives of so many children.

My wife and I are both personally affected by the retirement of Sister Imelda. Three of our four children attend St. Catherine, and Sister Imelda's departure will be a very emotional event for students and parents alike. Younger students will miss her open arms and candy

jar (both always full). Older students will miss her quiet Irish brogue and countless forays onto the stage during plays and talent shows. Parents will miss her most unassuming air that always commands immediate respect from both parents and students. And, most of all, we will all miss her absolutely unwavering faith in God and dedication to our children.

I come to the floor of the House of Representatives today to personally commend, honor and thank Sister Imelda on the occasion of her retirement from St. Catherine of Siena School. Sister, may the road always rise to meet you and the wind always be at your back.

—
A TRIBUTE TO THE CAREER OF
PATRICIA ANN JOHNSON

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. ROSS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated service of an individual from my district who has devoted her professional life to enhancing the educational development of students in our great State of Arkansas.

Patricia Ann Johnson has given 36 years of service in education to primary and community college students. On April 30th, Ms. Johnson will retire from teaching, but her legacy will continue in the schools and community where she taught.

Ms. Johnson served Mena for 31 years, teaching the first, second, third, and fourth grades at Louise Durham Elementary School where she was a continued source of inspiration for hundreds of school children while working for their educational and social advancement. In addition to her elementary school teaching, Ms. Johnson taught physical and health education at Rich Mountain Community College to students enrolled in those programs.

Ms. Johnson is an outstanding example of the lifetime dedication to service of Arkansas educators. I urge all citizens of Mena and the staff and students of Louise Durham Elementary School and Rich Mountain Community College to join me in honoring the career of a truly gifted, caring, and committed woman on the celebration of her retirement.

—
REGARDING THE VALUE OF LONG-
TERM RESEARCH STUDIES IN
UNDERSTANDING HEALTH RISKS
AND CONSEQUENCES

HON. LANE EVANS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. EVANS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important forum that took place in our Nation's capital last month. This forum, called by the U.S. Medicine Institute, convened scientific leaders from throughout the Federal Government to discuss the value of longitudinal studies in determining populations' risks for developing various health care conditions or diseases.

Science has long recognized the value of such studies, but it is critical for us as policy-

makers to also understand their role in helping inform our decisions. As the Ranking Member of the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, I am aware of numerous occasions upon which the Committee employed data from such studies to determine matters related to compensation for service-connected conditions and eligibility for health care benefits. For example, Congress has used longitudinal studies to determine conditions that should be compensated due to veterans' exposure to dioxin and to identify the effects of various exposures on the health of veterans from the first deployment to the Gulf. In the near future, VA intends to propose a followup study that will examine the long-term effects of post-traumatic stress disorder on veterans. This will provide important information to current and future generations of veterans.

Determining the effects of war-time exposures on veterans' health is often a convoluted task. During service, troops may be exposed to a variety of agents all of which may have health effects that are poorly understood. In combination, these agents may also have different effects. Further complicating matters, some exposures are known to cause health effects that do not appear until many years later. There are often too many unknown factors to determine exactly which troops were exposed to which agents at any point in time.

While there have been some limited improvements in documentation of troop locations, troop exposures and servicemembers' health before, during and immediately following deployment, large information gaps are likely to exist well into the future. Longitudinal research can help fortify available information and ensure that Congress and the Administration give individuals the benefit of the doubt.

I am pleased that the U.S. Medicine Institute saw fit to give this important topic its time and attention. I am offering the Institute's executive summary from its March 4, 2004 forum entitled "Taking the Long View: The Value of Studies Over Time" for inclusion in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD in the hopes that all Members will recognize the importance of supporting these studies to better inform our policy decisions.

TAKING THE LONG VIEW: THE VALUE OF
STUDIES OVER TIME

Long-term studies help answer specific questions about health risks and consequences over time and often deliver by-products not originally envisioned but with ongoing, exponential value. Consequently, long-term studies are essential for informed policymaking and provide liberal return on the substantial investment they entail.

These were the views interwoven throughout a forum held on March 4, 2004, by the nonprofit U.S. Medicine Institute for Health Studies. The consensus among panelists and participants was that long-term studies undoubtedly deliver great benefit to society at large, as well as to the specific group or groups targeted in a particular protocol. For example, the 22-year-old Ranch Hand study of agent orange exposure in Vietnam offers a trove of longitudinal data on the aging process in men—with much of this data yet to be tapped.

Forum deliberations found long-term studies of such value in answering questions relating to public health that they should become a byproduct of how "we normally do business" in healthcare—especially as digital patient records make collection and analysis of data amenable to routine analysis.

These edited proceedings present the remarks of panelists at the forum and the ensuing discussion among participants. Observations presented during the group's deliberations include:

Long-term studies are essential for the understanding of disease and, consequently, for disease management. They give policymakers the data and findings needed to make rational determinations about eligibility for compensation relating to occupational exposures.

As long-term studies are done in future, they should be accompanied by "clear" business case analyses, "so that there really is a clear understanding of the rewards that come from the . . . investment in conducting these studies."

As disease patterns among Americans shift away from the acute toward chronic, multiple conditions, long-term studies will assume a greater role, because they allow examination of particular populations and pick up a "different set of information" about risk factors than short-term clinical trials can.

Decades-long studies such as the Framingham Study that delineated risk factors in heart disease and the Harvard Nurses Study of risk factors for major chronic diseases in women are well-known examples of the importance that long-term investigations can have in shaping health practices and policies.

Long-term studies conducted by federal agencies need the stability afforded by designated funding, rather than having their funds come through basic agency appropriations.

The Veterans Affairs and Defense departments use long-term studies to help answer questions about potential deleterious health effects in troops from exposures during deployments—questions now anticipated for every deployment: Who was exposed; are those exposed showing unusual disease; are those exposed dying at unusual rates or from unusual causes, or has their health changed over time; do those exposed show higher incidence of cancer(s); do the children of those exposed exhibit higher rates of birth defects?

A classic longitudinal study is the Air Force Ranch Hand Study, initiated in 1982, which has seen the collection of 74,000 biological specimens and 19,000 x-rays and has involved more than 13,000 physical exams, more than 20,000 questionnaires and thousands of records on conception and birth. In addition, more than 2,800 death records have been obtained.

This study is scheduled to terminate in 2006, but that directive has met with controversy on grounds there is much information yet to be mined. To resolve whether the study should be continued, Congress has asked the Institute of Medicine to examine the scientific merit of retaining and maintaining the medical records, specimens and other data collected for the study; the potential value of extending the study; and the advisability and costs of making study specimens available to independent researchers.

An important longitudinal study that is just beginning in the military is the Millennium Cohort Study, which involves an initial study group of 10,000, with 20,000 more to be added this year and another 20,000 to be added in 2007. The study will examine employment exposures and post-deployment consequences in a group exposed in Kosovo or Southwest Asia, compared to a non-exposed cohort.

Study participants will be followed every three years by postal surveys; demographic and health information will be obtained and correlated over a 22-year period.

The Veterans Affairs Department regularly turns to the Institute of Medicine for objective, independent literature reviews of the

long-term effects of exposure on troops—for Vietnam, for the first Gulf war and for the current Iraq conflict, for example. Results are used to help set compensation policy.

Ti-service longitudinal studies might best be centralized and coordinated through the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, which encompasses all service branches as well as the U.S. Public Health Service.

Doing longitudinal studies often is difficult in the academic setting, where there is pressure for immediate pay-off. At the same time, studies produced by federal researchers all too often are rejected by regular scientific journals as being of limited interest because they focus on military or veteran populations.

ISRAEL INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. JOSEPH CROWLEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. CROWLEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the people of the State of Israel and the greater Jewish community on the 56th anniversary of their Independence. The creation of the Jewish State in 1948 was met with the immediate support and recognition from the United States, and our country has continued to consider Israel our closest friend and strongest ally. As Israel continues to fight against terrorist groups, it is more important than ever the United States continues to show our solidarity and provide whatever aid and support both economic and moral, to our friend Israel.

Israel, as the only truly democratic nation in the Middle East should be lauded for 56 years of democracy. Israel continues to show the world that this small state which has been surrounded by aggressive states for most of its existence is here to stay. I believe the survival of the Jewish state is paramount and the United States must continue to encourage Israel's sustained efforts to defend the freedoms and rights it has secured its citizens.

That is why I commend President Bush, for his strong leadership in standing with Prime Minister Sharon in support of Israel's withdrawal from Gaza, and in support of limited Israeli settlements in the West Bank. Prime Minister Sharon's bold and courageous position is following in the footsteps of Prime Minister Barak's withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon. Unfortunately though, just as in Lebanon, I do not believe Hamas, the Palestinian Authority or other terrorist organizations will show the strong leadership and quest for peace that the Israeli government has shown, by stopping their terrorist attacks against the Jewish state.

Since its Independence, Israel has endured the unstable and troubling conditions in the Middle East that have sparked several wars and incited much violence. Yet the Israeli people remain united and strong and continue to stand up for their nation. That is why I stand here today, and re-affirm the right of the Israeli people to always protect themselves and their state from the forces of terrorism, no matter where it may exist.

Israel is a modern success story, the only Democracy in the Middle East, the only Middle Eastern country where Arabs have the right to vote for their elected officials and their political

leaders. Her detractors, and those who hide their anti-Semitism behind anti-Zionism must not denigrate the success of Israel. I am proud to be one of Israel's strongest friends in Congress and to stand here today and wish Israel a hearty Mazel Tov on 56 years of Independence.

A TRIBUTE TO THE PLAYERS AND COACH OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT MEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. BERNARD SANDERS

OF VERMONT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. SANDERS. Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate the players of the University of Vermont Men's Basketball Team, and their coach, Tom Brennan, on an extraordinary basketball season.

It is certainly worthy of both recognition and celebration when a team finishes a tough schedule with over 20 wins—UVM went 22–9 on the year—and wins its conference championship. UVM lost its first game in the NCAA tournament to Connecticut, but there is no disgrace in losing to the only team which never lost a game in the entire tournament, for UConn was the eventual champion of the collegiate Division I basketball.

And it is certainly worth acknowledging the excitement that the team evoked all over the state of Vermont; our state is very proud of the wonderful record of this year's glorious team, and of both the men's and women's basketball teams at the University of Vermont in recent years. And the state is very proud as well that Vermont's own Taylor Coppenrath was selected to the AP All-America Team, as an honorable mention.

But what the people of Vermont are most proud of, and I include myself in their number, is that this basketball team not only played well on the basketball court, they worked hard and learned well in the classrooms and laboratories that are the heart of our state university. College is, after all, primarily about academics and not athletics.

At a time when the nation, and the NCAA as well, is deeply concerned that many athletes competing in major sports at Division I schools are not graduating from college, when there is widespread concern that often the educational mission of universities is put aside in the interest of athletic success, the men's basketball team in Vermont reminded us all that education and athletics can go together.

Of the 64 teams in the NCAA Division I Men's Basketball tournament, only the University of Vermont had 8 of its players with a grade point average of 3.0 or better. The Catamounts had the best GPA of any team in the 65-team NCAA tournament.

The team's dual achievement—succeeding at the highest level in both athletics and academics—makes Vermont proud, and serves, I believe, as an example to the nation.

Our congratulations go to the members of the 2003–2004 University of Vermont Men's Basketball Team: T.J. Sorrentine, Jack Phelan, Kyle Cieplicki (of Shelburne, VT), Martin Klimes, Mike Goia, Taylor Coppenrath (of West Barnet, VT), David Hehn, Germain Njila, Alex Jensen, Corey Sullivan, Matt Hanson,

Scotty Jones and Matt Sheftic (of Essex Junction, VT). And to those who helped them succeed on the court and off: Tom Brennan, head coach; Jesse Agel, associate head coach; Pat Filien, assistant coach; Jeff Rush, assistant coach; Chris Poulin, athletic trainer/strength coach; Reza Mohamed and Amarildo Barbosa, student managers; and Ryan Gore, student athletic trainer.

CELEBRATING THE ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate Yom Ha'Atzmaut, the anniversary of the Independence of the State of Israel.

It took a horrific, unimaginable Holocaust for the world to finally acknowledge the need to establish a homeland for the Jewish people, to shield it from the persecution and discrimination that it had endured for generations. That recognition came in 1948, and the State of Israel was born.

Today it is as important as ever to preserve and safeguard this Jewish national homeland and to ensure the security of Israel and its people. Never again should a people face annihilation. That is why a safe and secure Israel is in everyone's interest.

We must continue to strive for a settlement of conflict in the Middle East that guarantees the right of all people in the region to live in peace. That is my wish on this day as we celebrate the independent State of Israel.

IN RECOGNITION OF PROFESSOR CHÈRE GIBSON

HON. MARK GREEN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I rise today before this house to honor the accomplishments of Professor Chère Campbell Gibson who will be retiring after 27 years of service to the University of Wisconsin System and the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Human Ecology on June 30, 2004.

Professor Gibson received her B.S. from Macdonald College of McGill University in Nutrition, and her M.S. and Ph.D. in Continuing and Vocational Education from the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Professor Gibson has had a long, multi-faceted, and distinguished career of teaching, research, and outreach in the discipline of adult education with a particular emphasis on distance learning. She is especially well-known among distance educators around the world. Professor Gibson also has the distinction of being the first faculty member on the UW-Madison campus to teach a course completely on-line. This distinction gave her many opportunities to participate in faculty development workshops around campus and the country as well as involvement in the selection of learner and course management systems.

Throughout her career, she has had an enduring concern about the equality of access to

education and has recognized the importance of ensuring not only access but also success in educational pursuits. In recognition of these contributions to the field of teaching and learning at a distance, the United State Distance Learning Association inducted her into their Hall of Fame in 2003.

Chère Campbell Gibson's love of teaching and working with students is a consistent thread throughout her professional career. She has and will continue to have a lasting impact on the lives of her students and advisees. It cannot go without saying that she has also wonderfully touched the lives of her colleagues and friends.

The Executive Committee of the School of Human Ecology, at its meeting on March 22, 2004, by unanimous vote, endorsed the recommendation of the Department of Interdisciplinary Studies to award Emerita status to Professor Chère Campbell Gibson.

Mr. Speaker, it is an honor and my great pleasure to recognize today the outstanding and exemplary service of Professor Chère Campbell Gibson. On behalf of my constituents and citizens from the great State of Wisconsin, we say a hearty thank you, and wish her all the very best in her future endeavors.

2ND ANNIVERSARY OF
GOVBENEFITS.GOV

HON. ADAM H. PUTNAM

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. PUTNAM. Mr. Speaker, on April 29, 2004, the U.S. Department of Labor will celebrate the second anniversary of GovBenefits.gov. Additionally, in collaboration with the Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Labor will launch the GovLoans.gov website as an integrated part of GovBenefits.gov. GovLoans.gov will be a one-stop shop for Federal loan programs.

I want to recognize the successful inter-agency collaboration between the U.S. Department of Labor and the U.S. Department of Education to improve the American public's access to their government through the launch of GovLoans.gov. I would also like to congratulate and recognize the U.S. Department of Labor for consistently demonstrating GovBenefits.gov as a leading government-to-citizen initiative that is offering tremendous value to the American public.

GovBenefits.gov is a prime example of what e-Government should look and act like. In working together with nearly a dozen other agencies, the Department of Labor has launched this one stop shop for individuals interested in learning what government benefits for which they may be eligible.

GovLoans.gov will provide a broad range of information on Federal loan programs, as well as educational tools and resources to help citizens and small business owners understand the loan process. This site will also help consumers find the loan that best fits their individual needs, and will serve as a trusted and comprehensive point of access to Federal loan information.

GovLoans.gov is a Presidential initiative managed by the U.S. Department of Education that will provide citizens and small business owners with comprehensive information

on available Federal loan programs from the five major Federal credit agencies: the U.S. Departments of Education, Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development, Veterans Affairs, and the Small Business Administration.

GovLoans.gov consolidates loan programs across government into a single portal and simplifies the language describing each program, enabling citizens and small business owners to easily find applicable Federal loans that meet their needs and to better understand the loan process.

GovBenefits.gov represents a partnership of 10 Federal agencies, including the U.S. Department of Labor (managing partner), and the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Education, Energy, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, State, Veteran Affairs, and the Social Security Administration.

Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Government Reform Subcommittee on Technology, Information Policy, Intergovernmental Relations and the Census, I commend the U.S. Department of Labor for its work in developing GovBenefits.gov as a leading government-to-citizen initiative that is offering tremendous value to the American public and recognize GovBenefits.gov and GovLoans.gov as citizen-centric initiatives that are demonstrating the intent of the President's Management Agenda.

EASTERN NEW MEXICO'S COMPASSION
EARNs NATIONAL ATTENTION

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to tell my colleagues about an amazing act of selflessness that has recently earned national press coverage for a small town in my congressional district.

In February, the Portales News Tribune reported that students in Dora, New Mexico had donated \$3,000 they raised for their prom to the family of sixteen-year-old Clayton Stokes, who was killed in a pickup truck crash. Motivated by this, other students in the school helped raise another \$4,000 for the family.

Dora High School Principal Bill Stockton said that the 11th grade students who attend the school decided to donate their prom money after a memorial assembly for their late classmate. These students had diligently been saving for their prom for 3 years.

Clayton, a resident of Causey, was a bright young man with a promising future before him. He was born on March 21, 1987, in Carlsbad, to Jim and Cathy Stokes. He was active in both varsity basketball and baseball at Dora High School. He enjoyed riding horses and snowboarding and was a member of the Dora FFA. Family members said he enjoyed working in construction with his father and two brothers and spending time with family and friends.

As Principal Stockton noted, losing a student in a small school is like losing a family member. The students' gesture alone deserves our deep praise and admiration, however, there is more to this story.

Rooney Moon Broadcasting was so touched by the students' generosity that the station

asked radio listeners to help replace the money so the students could have their prom after all. Within hours, the station helped raise nearly \$17,000. Incredibly, the money has continued coming in and the station places the latest total around \$22,000. A memorial scholarship in Clayton's name is planned.

This money poured in from residents all across eastern New Mexico, primarily from residents in Curry and Roosevelt counties. It is clear to me that the spirit of "paying it forward" is alive and well in this area of New Mexico.

The first donation came from Mike Knight, owner of Rib Crib in Clovis, who volunteered to cater the Dora prom. McDonalds of Portales pledged \$1,000 for the scholarship fund. The Bank of America in Clovis and Tankersley's arranged for all the boys to have rental tuxedos.

The May 3, 2004, issue of People magazine has an article about this wonderful deed. The magazine has a section entitled "Local Heroes" for people in the country that are making a difference. This act is certainly worthy of this recognition. On a personal note, I am pleased that millions of Americans will learn of the honorable and heroic deeds of my eastern New Mexico constituents through this article in one of the largest publications in the Nation.

Mr. Speaker, thank you for affording me the opportunity to brief my colleagues regarding this inspiring story. In a time of bleak news in our world, it is indeed refreshing to be reminded of the kindheartedness of our friends and neighbors. I am attaching the article and request that it be reprinted in its entirety in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD so that we may be reminded of this account throughout the ages.

[From People, May 3, 2004]

THE PROM MUST GO ON

For three years, the 11th graders of Dora High in remote Dora, N. Mex., had scraped their pennies together from bake sales and fund-raisers for their prom. Then, suddenly, a prom didn't seem so important. Around midnight on Feb. 15, classmate Clayton Stokes was driving home after hanging out with friends when he dozed at the wheel. His truck flipped over, and Stokes, 16, an athlete and joker, died instantly.

Tragic as it was, Stokes's death set off an avalanche of goodwill that has left residents of Dora (pop. 500) feeling pretty good about their town. The day after his death, Clayton's classmates piled into vans and drove to the Stokeses' home. There, they handed a \$3,000 check—their entire prom fund—to his devastated parents, Jim, 48, and Cathy, 45, so they could bury their youngest boy. "We never thought twice about it," says Kassandra Clark, 16. The rest of the school chipped in, raising another \$4,000. "They floored us," says Jim, a construction worker. "For them to love my boy so much to give up their prom," adds Cathy. "It didn't take the pain away, but it eased it."

That was only the beginning. Local radio host Steve Rooney and his cohost got wind of the gesture, and on the day Clayton was laid to rest, they asked listeners for donations so the kids could have their prom. "We couldn't answer the phones fast enough," he says. The juniors, who had held a sleepover at classmate Ashlet Carter's house, tuned in while dressing for the memorial. "We had to redo our makeup," says Carter. "We all kept crying."

The money kept coming—\$22,000 so far, some of it to create a scholarship fund in Clayton's name. And on April 24, Dora High will have a prom. What would Clayton think

of it all? "He'd go, 'Dang, golly,'" says Travis Belcher, his best friend. "He wouldn't believe it, but he'd be pretty proud."

POSTHUMOUS TRIBUTE TO
EUGENE MARTINYAK

HON. THADDEUS G. McCOTTER

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. McCOTTER. Mr. Speaker, recently I lost an inspirational family member, and with sadness, I pay my uncle, Eugene Martinyak, a posthumous tribute today.

Eugene truly lived the American Dream. Born to Polish and Ukrainian immigrants in 1936, he served our Nation in the United States Army from 1954–1957. Starting from virtually nothing, Eugene supported his family of four children while working full time attending college.

As a professional, Eugene helped develop computer systems for the Chrysler Automotive Corporation. In doing so, Eugene fulfilled a promise to his children: gave them more than he ever had.

Thus, on behalf of us all, I extend my deepest condolences to his wife Carol and his entire family for their loss.

CHANGE OF COMMAND FOR THE
USS "JOHN F. KENNEDY" (CV-67)

HON. ANDER CRENSHAW

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. CRENSHAW. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Captain Ronald H. Henderson, Jr, Commander of the USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV-67). As he prepares to move on to a new challenge, I would like to thank him for all that he has done as the Commander of Mayport's aircraft carrier, the USS *John F. Kennedy*. His passion for the Navy and its sailors has been evident through his leadership during the unprecedented and extensive maintenance overhaul that was accomplished here at Mayport. It was his management, skill, and persona that brought to a successful completion the largest overall ever attempted outside of a Naval Shipyard. He epitomizes the dedicated military patriot.

As the Navy moves into the 21st Century, it will take innovative and effective leadership to make this service truly transformational. Leaders who possess these characteristics are what makes our Navy the greatest in the world. Under his command, both in war and in peace, he inspired his crew to rise to all challenges. Thanks to his guidance, "Jack is back."

Here in the community he should be commended for reaching out to our citizens and inviting them to go aboard the *Kennedy* and share a glimpse of life at sea. Civilians, in record numbers, were afforded opportunities to experience firsthand the pride that the crew and the Navy has in our beloved carrier. Jacksonville has been enriched by his service.

It has been my honor and pleasure to work with him these past two years. Jacksonville will miss you, but I know he will continue to

lead the Navy in whatever new job he is assigned. I wish him luck in his new assignment and well-deserved promotion, and best wishes to his family, Kathryn and Alexander. I hope when it is time for retirement, he will think about returning to Jacksonville.

WOMEN INSPIRING HOPE AND
POSSIBILITY

HON. HEATHER WILSON

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mrs. WILSON of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, in honor of Women's History Month, I asked New Mexicans to send me nominations of women in New Mexico who have given special service to our community, but may have never received recognition for their good deeds.

On Friday, March 19, 2004, I had the honor and privilege of recognizing forty-one worthy nominations describing sacrifices and contributions these women have made for our community. The people who nominated the women describe the dedication they have witnessed: volunteer hours for veterans services, service on non-profit boards, homeless programs, mentors for young women, healthcare providers going above the call of duty, child advocates, volunteers at churches and synagogues, successful business women, wives, mothers and friends.

Allow me to share information about this year's nominees:

Charlotte Anderson—Charlotte is a person who goes out of her way every single day to help others. She works through her church, community, and through her job at Jiffy Lube to make other peoples lives easier, and happier.

Sandra Begay-Campbell—Sandra's work with Native American tribes truly inspires hope for improving conditions and providing new possibilities through technology for Native Americans and others in rural areas. As a member of the Navajo Nation, she serves as a cultural interpreter to both Sandia and the Navajo Nation.

Jo Ann Clements—Jo Ann served as President of the City Council for Beta Sigma Phi in Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. Her tireless efforts earned her Beta Sigma Phi's top honor as "Woman of the Year." She also served on this year's "Women on the Move" committee for the YWCA, where she encouraged nominations, sold sponsorships and ads, and did whatever she could to make the event successful.

Sandy Cody—Sandy is owner of Resources for Excellence, a small, woman-owned business. Sandy generously donates her time and skills to non-profit agencies like Alzheimer's Association, Southeast Community Economic Alliance, and Goodwill Industries, to make life better for people in need and in risk.

Rose Diaz—Rose is the 2004 President of the Oral History Association. She also served on the NAFTA Committee for Enterprise for the Americas Act and the Good Neighbor Environmental Board. She is a former Executive Committee member of the Board of Directors of the National Council on Public History.

Lori Dotson—Lori has dedicated her career to improving the quality of life within her community through protection of the environment,

including serving as an Expert Witness to successfully protect the groundwater supply in her community. Lori has designed and managed projects to clean contaminated groundwater and contaminated sites. She is also a key member of the organizing committee for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation: Sandia Peak Challenge.

Katherine Fishback—In 1945, Katherine opened the Fishback Studio of dance. Fishback served on several national dance organization faculties. She received a 50-year Life Achievement Award for her teaching career from Dance Masters of America, Inc.

Jessie Fitzgerald—Jessie was the first woman County Extension Agent in the United States. She served on the Lava Soil and Water Conservation District Board in Grants for many years before moving to the Albuquerque area and joining the Ciudad Soil and Water Conservation District.

Linda Gabaldon Ward Hersee—Linda is very active with Thunderbirds Little League. She serves as the Team Mom, Sponsor Director. Linda is very active in the community and is always there to help.

Aileen Gallegos—Aileen is a current Board Member at Ronald McDonald's House; graduate of Leadership Albuquerque; and active choir member at Prince of Peace Catholic Church.

Verna Gurule—Verna is a fourth grade teacher at Alvarado Elementary School in the North Valley. Volunteers who work with her have witnessed her devotion to her class and her tireless efforts to give her students every opportunity to participate in an enriched curriculum.

Bonnie Herbert—A member of Assistance League of Albuquerque for 19 years, she became President of the organization in 1998, and now is their National Director of Philanthropic Projects.

Kitsie Hilaire—Kitsie has volunteered with the American Red Cross for over twenty years. Since her arrival to Albuquerque in 1999, Kitsie has been instrumental in improving their community's emergency response and preparedness skills. Kitsie is also a volunteer with the "Hearts Apart Program" on Kirtland Air Force Base.

Michelle Holdren—Her community involvement has her working with Youth At Risk, a mentoring program in the Rio Rancho Area, and Northside Civitans has her work with the youth at Youth/Diagnostic and Development Center, the Camino Nuevo Youth Center, and El Ranchitos Del Los Ninos. Michelle devotes a great deal of time to the Multiple Sclerosis Society, American Cancer Society, Alzheimer's Association, and Project Share.

Regina Lee Hunter—Regina has done much to make Sandia National Laboratories a better place to work for Sandians with handicaps. As a founding member of Sandia's Disability Awareness Committee, she has worked to have specific handicapped parking marked and to have enforcement for the usage of these locations.

Nobie Hurley—Nobie moved to Albuquerque in 1960. She was the Director of Volunteer Services for St. Joseph's Hospital from 1976 to 1997. Since retirement Nobie has been volunteering her time at the Bernalillo County Republican Party as well as the State Republican Party. Nobie was recently asked by Archbishop Sheehan to be on his advisory council for the National newspaper publication of "The people of God."

Cristina Jaramillo—Cristina has served as President for the Valencia Shelter for Victims of Domestic Violence, Chairman of the University of New Mexico Valencia Campus Development Board, and as a member of the Belen Chamber of Commerce Board, and Belen Noon Optimists. Cristina currently serves as a member of the United Way of Central New Mexico Women in Leadership Council, New Mexico Financial Corporation and Ranchers Banks Board of Directors, United Way's Valencia County Community Board, UNM-VC Development Board, Albuquerque Chamber of Commerce Albuquerque Reads Committee, and as a representative member of the Albuquerque Hispano Chamber and the Boys and Girls Club of Valencia County.

Michelle Judkins—Michelle worked fulltime for 15 years to raise money for the care of elderly people that could not afford quality nursing home care, all while raising a child alone. She then supervised and trained Hospice volunteers, and started an upscale Hospice thrift store to raise money.

Lillian Kennesson—Lillian was diagnosed with breast cancer just before her 26th birthday. She was one of the youngest to be treated at UNM Cancer Research and was fortunate to have an amazing doctor. Her family celebrated because she had been placed in remission, until a year later when she was diagnosed with cancer again. This time it was caught in the early stage at age 29. She made a vow to live each day to the fullest, eat healthy and exercise each day.

Susan Kitsch—Susan is the Principle Member of Laboratory Staff at Sandia National Labs, where she administers programs for military and industrial partners primarily in Synthetic Aperture Radar. Susan was a founding member of the NM Compensation and Benefits Association.

Lilly Kutzscher—Two and a half years ago, Lilly's niece had her fourth child. Her niece lost her husband and now is living with her mother. Lilly took it upon herself to care for this child at their home five days a week while her niece and mother work to support the family.

Darlene Leonard—Darlene is the manager of Volunteer Programs in Sandia's Community Involvement Department. She coordinates Make-A-Difference Day for Sandia, and under her leadership, the Sandia program was recognized by Parade Magazine as one of the outstanding programs of its kind. The Thunderbird Awards is a program that Darlene is particularly proud of.

Linda Lee Louie—Linda knew no English when she and her husband married in 1963. Encouraged by her husband, she attended evening classes at the Old Albuquerque High School and studied with a tutor to achieve English literacy. Linda donates her bilingual skills and knowledge of Chinese culture to benefit Albuquerque and the Asian American community.

Linda Lovato-Montoya—Linda is doing extraordinary things in the fight against breast cancer and was recently recognized by Yoplait, SELF Magazine and the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation as one of 25 Yoplait Champions. Linda provides support, advocacy, education, and awareness about breast cancer to NM Hispanics.

Emma Lutton—Emma has turned her attention to the youth in her area by forming a Youth Development Program committee which

provides youth education activities and senior mentorship. She is also developing programs to enhance Education, Arts and Music and Recreation activities for their youth and seniors jointly.

Rebecca Maloy—Rebecca is a minority business owner of a local construction company, Maloy Construction. She has been recognized with an Outstanding Women's Award from NM Woman Magazine, which also featured her on their cover. Rebecca wrote an article "Business to Crow About," also featured in the magazine.

Joyce Miller—Joyce spends many hours helping out at St. Mark's Church. Often she cooks meals for the needy or seniors. She leads a women's bible group and prepares the altar for services. When St. Mark's Church flooded, she cleaned out the water and debris.

Sheila Nawman—Shortly after 9/11, Sheila was working at her computer when a banner showing a star with five vertical stripes caught her eye. Sheila decided to make a 14 inch by 42 inch banner to display support of those affected by the tragic event. So far, over 1100 banners have been presented.

Audrey Rose Ornelas—Audrey has accomplished her dream of obtaining a Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology. To get to this point she had to go beyond her disabilities, not only physical but learning disabilities as well. She underwent several brain surgeries due to brain injuries, and she is also dyslexic and has other learning disabilities. She plans to continue on to Highlands University for a master's degree in counseling with an emphasis on children and adolescents who are handicapped.

Beth Pattillo—As a full-time working mother in Los Alamos County, Beth runs errands and shovels driveways for elderly neighbors, makes meals for the sick, babysits to give stressed moms a break, leads a Girl Scout Troop, and teaches in her church.

Tara Ransom—Tara is a junior at La Cueva High School. She volunteers at Casa Esperanza, Joy Junction, Roadrunner Food Bank, Balloon Fiesta, and the Doggie Dash and Dawdle. Tara developed hydrocephalus as a small baby and has had six surgeries on her brain. The only medical option to keep Tara alive is a shunt, a drain made of silicone. Silicone has been branded as dangerous and it has been a constant fight for most of Tara's life to keep the material available.

Karen Renschler—Karen is the mother of autistic twin sons, who are now 19 years old. Karen is now a teacher, developing a fine arts program for 40 severely handicapped children with exceptionalities ranging from blindness to cerebral palsy to autism.

Karen Robinson—Karen is a dedicated, full time volunteer, encouraging students in the area of science and math. She teaches hands-on science at Collet Park Elementary School. At Grant Middle School, she plays a very important role with their 8th grade Science Class. She also helps organize their science fair and prepares 18 students to go on to the Southwest Regional Science Fair.

Audrey Roybal—This nomination was made on behalf of Annette's seven-year-old son who thinks the world of his first-grade teacher, Mrs. Roybal. She makes learning fun, she is very compassionate, caring, professional, and informative.

Juanita Sanchez—Juanita is a member of the Laboratory Staff at Sandia National Labs

running the United Way campaign at Sandia for the past 12 years. Juanita also serves on the United Way's Campaign Cabinet and serves on the Board of Directors for the Peanut Butter and Jelly Preschool.

Carol Schulze—Carol began volunteering with the American Red Cross Mid-Rio Grande Chapter in August 2000 and has been a valuable resource to them ever since. After completing basic disaster training, Carol began volunteering at the chapter office full-time as a caseworker, assisting disaster clients with their needs.

Georgia Seery—Georgia taught physical education and spent her entire professional career in Socorro. Georgia and her husband started many community youth programs introducing golf. She was a leader and a teacher by example. She held high standards and expectations. She was organized and objective. She challenged her students to do their best in academics and sports. She has made a difference in hundred of young lives.

Bonnie Snowdon—Bonnie is the mother of a mentally ill son who is now in his 30's. She works tirelessly for better treatment of the mentally ill, gives much time and effort to supporting the mentally ill, gives them hope, and suggests ways for them to better themselves despite their limitations.

Rosemary St. John—Rosemary has been a volunteer with the American Red Cross Mid-Rio Grande Chapter since January 1999. She has been instrumental in helping the chapter improve service delivery to the Albuquerque community, serving on a Disaster Action Team and assisting people displaced by small local disasters, such as single house fires, with their immediate disaster-caused needs.

Anna Vargas—Anna currently attends Albuquerque Job Corps. Anna was born in Mexico, but left that country to get away from an abusive father. In 2000, she went to the shelter for victims of domestic violence and in November of that year, she gave birth to her son. She is now an intern in Congresswoman WILSON's District Office.

Judy Zanotti—Judy had a successful career at PNM and then she retired. She is President of New Mexico First, Judy volunteers for dozens of other organizations. This past year, she served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the luncheon for President Fox from Mexico, co-chair for the 20th Annual Celebration of "Women on the Move," chair of the selections process for the "Ethics in Business" Award, and a member of the committee to select a new Dean of the Anderson Schools of Management at UNM.

IRI CONTINUES TO PROMOTE FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

HON. JOE WILSON

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I have previously expressed my support for the International Republican Institute's (IRI) outstanding work in Iraq, Eastern Europe, and Africa and want to reiterate my support as IRI celebrates its 20th anniversary. Tonight, IRI led by president George Folsom will celebrate this auspicious occasion during its 2004 Freedom Dinner at which IRI will present the Freedom Award for advancing democracy to Dr.

Condeleeza Rice, the National Security Advisor, and honor the late Sergio de Mello, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights who was killed in Iraq.

I also want to focus on the unique opportunities which IRI provides for Americans to share the skills they have honed on campaign trails and in the halls of Congress with their counterparts in developing democracies. Volunteers from across the U.S. augment IRI's operations in over 56 countries by conducting specialized training missions on crafting campaign finance laws, strengthening political participation among women and youth, and implementing political polling. Additionally, IRI frequently sends volunteers to serve on election observation missions. Recently, my own Chief of Staff, Eric Dell returned from an election observation mission in Macedonia where he worked with IRI professionals from across the globe.

Mr. Speaker, IRI's use of volunteers builds goodwill for the U.S. as Americans assist men and women overseas to strengthen political parties and democratic institutions. For example, interactions between a city administrator from rural South Carolina and a mayor in Malawi can go far in breaking misconceptions about the U.S. and about the prognosis for democracy in Africa. IRI volunteers demonstrate to newly elected parliamentarians in Eastern Europe that building democratic institutions is not only a goal of U.S. government officials but that it is the desire of the American people. I hope that my colleagues and their staffers consider participating in IRI training missions as one of the best opportunities to play a critical role in implementing U.S. foreign policy.

HONORING SISTER ROSEMARY
WARD FOR HER ENDLESS SERVICE
AND DEDICATION TO THE
COMMUNITY

HON. VITO FOSSELLA

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. FOSSELLA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and pay tribute to a remarkable citizen from my district, Sister Rosemary Ward. Sister Rosemary was recently presented with the Patrick Daly Memorial Award for her dedication to the care and education of children on Staten Island. For almost 55 years, she has been an exceptionally devoted teacher and principal in schools within my district. As do the truly great educators, she possesses a deep understanding and compassion for children. In combining this gift with her own values and ideals, she has created a holistic philosophy for education that has made her an invaluable asset to the community as teacher and principal. Her achievements are widely known and well sung by the innumerable citizens she's left a lasting impression upon. It is with pleasure and honor that I'd like to congratulate Sister Rosemary for this distinguished award, and on behalf of the citizens of Staten Island offer my most sincere gratitude for the extraordinary contributions she's made to the community.

HONORING HERNANDO COUNTY
LAW ENFORCEMENT

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Hernando County Sheriff's Office and the Brooksville City Police Department for their commitment to maintaining law and order while safeguarding county residents. Hernando County has grown tremendously. It is regarded as one of the fastest growing counties in the nation with a population that has increased 330 percent since 1980. This growth has presented new challenges to our local law enforcement agencies. Thanks to the leadership and commitment of Sheriff Nugent and Police Chief Boyce, Hernando County continues to be provided effective and professional law enforcement.

I would like to recognize the bravery and selflessness of the fine individuals who wear the badge as this week marks Hernando County Law Enforcement Appreciation Week. These fine individuals who serve in law enforcement are an exceptional breed. They serve in the line of fire to protect us from harm's way and ask for little in return. The brave men and women of Hernando County law enforcement have more than earned our gratitude and whole hearted support. I am so very proud of our local sheriffs and police and happily thank them for their service and dedication to the county's safety. The residents of Hernando County and I are indebted to them.

RECOGNIZING FREEMAN'S FUR
SHOP

HON. ED WHITFIELD

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. WHITFIELD. Mr. Speaker, I rise in recognition of Freeman's Fur Shop, an outstanding small business with a unique history in my hometown of Hopkinsville, Kentucky.

Freeman's Furs is owned and operated by Mr. Paul Shaftranck. The business has operated for 68 years. Freeman's was founded by the late Howard Freeman when he fashioned a fox fur neckpiece for his wife. The business expanded to an internationally known landmark. For many years, Howard Freeman trapped many of the animals and then designed and made the coats. Upon his death in 1994, his son, Lindsay, took over the business along with his daughter, Ann Freeman Peace. In 1997, Freeman sold the business to Shaftranck.

Freeman's Furs has offered fur design, creation, storage, cleaning and repairs to customers from around the world. The quality of work performed and customer service provided is a testament to Howard Freeman. Freeman Fur's will cease operation in April, 2004.

Mr. Speaker, Freeman's Fur Shop is beloved by its faithful customers and all who walk through its doors. It is a shining example of the significance and economic impact a small business can have on a community. I

am proud to bring the accomplishments of Freeman's Fur Shop and its employees to the attention of this House.

RECOGNIZING JUSTIN SNYDER

HON. CORRINE BROWN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Ms. CORRINE BROWN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, Justin Snyder attained his bar mitzvah on May 1, 2004. Justin is a seventh grade honor student at Pace Academy in Atlanta, Georgia. He is sincerely committed to academics, as evidenced by his effort to obtain all "A's" in each of the last quarter's grading periods over the past twelve (12) quarters. Such an achievement has earned him the distinction of being placed on the Headmaster's List for the past four (4) years. Justin has also participated on the Academy's debate team, where he won many awards for his scholastic achievements. Finally, he is a member of "People to People Student Ambassadors", a travel program, which has enabled him to travel with other young people to Washington DC, California, Australia, and this summer to Europe.

Justin also finds time for recreational and sporting activities. He is an avid basketball, baseball, and tennis player—having won trophies in each sport. From his enjoyment of skiing, he has secured many awards in the form of pins and medallions, and has skied on various slopes not only throughout the United States, but also the world. Justin has scuba dived in the Cayman Islands, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia, and has caught a seventy-two (72) inch sailfish off the coast of Cancun.

Even at a relatively young age, Justin Snyder has left his mark on the youth community in his hometown of Atlanta, Georgia; evidencing a strong sense of fundamental fairness in his dealings with others, and strong moral principles, gleaned from his friends, his religious upbringing, and his family. I know that we will continue to see more great accomplishments for this fine young man, as he grows and blossoms into manhood. I am proud to recognize, and to honor Mr. Justin Snyder on this important step in his life, and wish him much continued success for the future.

ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE DAY

HON. ADAM B. SCHIFF

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. SCHIFF. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 56th anniversary of Israel's independence.

The dream of a Jewish state stretches back two millennia to the destruction of the ancient Jewish kingdom of Israel. At the end of the Nineteenth Century, after the two thousand years of diaspora, persecution, and pogroms, Theodor Herzl and his fellow Zionists began the drive to revive the Jewish homeland. The unspeakable horrors of the Holocaust cemented the necessity of a Jewish state, and Israel was finally established as a sovereign and independent nation on May 14, 1948.

In the 56 years since its establishment, Israel has served as a beacon of democracy in the Middle East. In the face of war, terrorism, and frequent diplomatic isolation, Israeli society has flourished because of the pluralism, freedom, and human rights guaranteed by Israel's democracy. These democratic values have sustained a strong alliance between Israel and the United States, an alliance of friendship, principles, strategy, and a commitment to defeat terror.

Perhaps more than any other nation, Israel understands the dilemmas faced by a democratic society confronted with terror. Terrorism threatens the institutions that nurture Israel's prosperity—both through the bloodshed it engenders and through the sacrifices of civil liberties necessary to achieve security. Israel has admirably maintained an open, democratic society in spite of relentless threats to its citizens. We in America must salute this accomplishment and try to learn from the Israeli experience how to balance homeland security and a free society.

Much as its existence has been constantly challenged over its turbulent history, Israel currently faces critical threats to its well-being. The cycle of terrorist violence and reprisals shows no signs of ceasing, and the virulent specter of anti-Semitism remains a staple in the Middle East and is resurgent in Western Europe. However, we must embrace the cautious optimism embodied in Israel's national anthem, *Hatikvah*, which means "the hope." We hope that Israel will continue to serve as the "light unto the nations" that Herzl envisioned more than a century ago and that Israel's 57th year will be a time of peace throughout the region.

CONGRATULATING MAURICE
CALDERON OF REDLANDS FOR
SERVICE TO THE HISPANIC COM-
MUNITY

HON. JERRY LEWIS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I would like today to congratulate Maurice Calderon of Redlands, whose efforts to ensure that all communities in San Bernardino County have access to financial services has been recognized by the Foreign Ministry of Mexico, which presented him with the Ohtli Award for public service.

I have counted Maurice Calderon as a friend for more than 30 years, and I have been proud to work with him on many projects to improve our communities in San Bernardino County. Maurice was born and raised in Banning, California, and served as a school board member there for nine years, followed by another nine as a community college trustee.

He is currently the Senior Vice President of Governmental Affairs and Community Development at Arrowhead Credit Union in San Bernardino, California. In that position, Maurice has been an advocate for providing financial services to the large and growing Hispanic community, many of them immigrants from Mexico. He was instrumental in convincing the credit union to open a new branch in the San

Bernardino minority community after all other banks had closed their outlets there.

Maurice is truly a community activist, serving as a member of both the Inland Empire Hispanic and African American Chambers of Commerce. He is a member of the Board of Trustees of both the University of California Foundation, and the San Bernardino Valley College Foundation. Maurice is also a Director for the Inland Empire Economic Partnership, and President of Sinfonia Mexicana.

His service has been recognized by many honors: "Father of the Year" from the City of Banning, "Citizen of the Year" from the City of Beaumont, "Hispanic of the Year," and "Influential Latino of the Year" in 1998 by the Inland Empire Hispanic Chamber and Hispanic Lifestyle Magazine, respectively. Maurice was the inaugural recipient of the California Credit Union League Diversity Award, and was named to the Southern California Native American and Latino Hall of Fame.

Most recently, Maurice Calderon has been recognized for his public service to the Mexican immigrant community by the Mexican Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which awarded him the Reconocimiento Ohtli Medal. It honors those individuals who are role models for society, and have contributed successfully toward building relations with the Mexican community living outside of the country.

Mr. Speaker, a big reason for Maurice Calderon's dedication to his community is the support he receives from Dorothy, his wife of more than 40 years, and his two children and four grandchildren. Please join me in congratulating the entire Calderon family for this honor, and thanking him for all the years of public service he has given the people of San Bernardino and Riverside counties.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. ELTON GALLEGLY

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. GALLEGLY. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, April 22, 2004, I was unable to vote on H. Res. 602, on ordering the previous question (rollcall 126); and on agreeing to H. Res. 602 (rollcall 127). Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on both questions.

Additionally Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, April 22, 2004, I was unable to vote on the Larson amendment to H.R. 2844 (rollcall 128); and on Larson amendment (2) to H.R. 2844 (rollcall 129). Had I been present, I would have voted "no" on both measures.

And, finally, on Thursday, April 22, 2004, I was unable to vote on final passage of H.R. 2844, the Continuity in Representation Act of 2004 (rollcall 130). Had I been present, I would have voted "yea."

RENEW THE BAN ON ASSAULT WEAPONS

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, in 139 days the assault weapons ban will expire. In 139 days our

streets could be flooded with AK-47's. In 139 days the work of 10 years and the progress towards safer neighborhoods could vanish. In 139 days we could see the semiautomatic weapons that are used in combat zones on our street corners.

But we don't have to let this happen. H.R. 2038, the Assault Weapons Ban and Law Enforcement Protection Act of 2003, is a common sense approach to protecting Americans from dangerous and impractical weapons. I continue to support responsible legislation that protects the rights of those who collect or hunt and use weapons for legitimate recreational purposes, but I think we can all agree that restricting the availability of Uzis will not impede lawful hunting. Assault weapons make up less than 1 percent of all guns but they are 18 times more likely than other guns to be cop-killers, and 16 times more likely to be traced to crime than other firearms.

H.R. 2038 is supported by more than three-fourths of the American public and virtually every major national law enforcement organization. In fact President Bush and Attorney General John Ashcroft have both stated their support for this legislation. I urge the leadership of the House to protect Americans from these senseless weapons of mass destruction and bring this legislation to the floor for a vote.

IN OBSERVANCE OF THE 56TH AN-
NIVERSARY OF THE INDEPEND-
ENCE OF ISRAEL

HON. ROBERT T. MATSUI

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. MATSUI. Mr. Speaker, I want to join my colleagues and the world Jewish community in congratulating the people of Israel on the celebration of the 56th anniversary of their independence. Israel is the only true democracy and our country's strongest ally in the Middle East. Since the United States became the first country to recognize Israel's independence, our countries have shared a deep friendship and partnership. We are bonded by our commitment to democracy and freedom.

Since they declared their independence in 1948, Israel has faced continuous challenges to their right to exist as a sovereign country. To this day, we hear new reports almost daily of violence against the people of Israel. Thousands of innocent lives have been lost to attacks by terrorist organizations.

As Israel's partner, the United States must stand with its allies against these violent assaults on the Israeli people and maintain our commitment to a free, peaceful and democratic Israel. As partners in peace, the United States must also support Israel's right to take necessary measures to defend its citizens against violence. The future of Israel, and the hopes of peace in the Middle East depend on it.

CELEBRATING ISRAEL'S 56TH
ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE**HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 27, 2004

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the state of Israel on the celebration of its 56th anniversary of independence. Born out of the ashes of the Holocaust, Israel has blossomed into a dynamic and successful democracy. I urge all of my colleagues to pause and recognize this grand achievement.

Since their forced removal from the historic land of Israel by the Romans some 2,000 years ago, Jews have migrated the four corners of the earth. With the establishment of

the modern state of Israel, Jews once again found sovereignty and self-rule in the land of their forefathers.

The United States has a special relationship with Israel and her people, and it is right that we do. Israel, like the United States, values liberty, individual expression, and freedom of religion, assembly and the press. It too is a land of immigrants from continents as diverse as Asia, Europe, Africa, and the Americas. We share basic values of freedom, a love of life, and a concern for our citizens' well-being. Israel also is a land of great innovation, home to great advancements in biosciences, agriculture and computer sciences to name a few. Israel's military and our own share resources and work together to achieve advances in defense technology that benefit both nations.

We all know that Israel finds itself beset by enemies sworn to its destruction, facing daily

acts of terrorism. We in Congress stand firmly behind Israel's security. Israel is a reality, and it is here to stay. The sooner Israel's neighbors accept this basic point, the sooner we will see progress toward peace.

Israel faces many great challenges, and solving them will take our active participation. The United States has a stake in the future of Israel and in the entire region, and we must not neglect our obligation to lead and the opportunity to respond. We should not dictate results, but should work always to create an environment that encourages dialogue.

Today is a day of celebration, one that marks the great achievements of Israel and her citizens these past 56 years. Like our own independence, Israel's comes at great cost. We all look forward to the day when Israel will celebrate its independence in peace.